

A POET
AND TWO PAINTERS

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1179



D. H. Lawrence

Knud Merrild

A POET
AND TWO PAINTERS

A Memoir of D. H. Lawrence

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**“To Frieda, my wife and Gótzsche; and
all of Lawrence’s and my friends.”**

CONTENTS

FOREWORD	<i>page</i> xi
PREFACE	xv
TAOS	xix
DEL MONTE RANCH	71
TAOS AGAIN	257
CALIFORNIA	289
INDEX	361

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

D. H. Lawrence	<i>Frontispiece</i>
	FACING PAGE
The Adobe Church in Rancho de Taos, New Mexico, 1922	6
Knud Merrild in the Danes' Taos Studio, 1922	18
The Danes and their faithful Lizzie	18
Lawrence and Gótzsche outside Hot Springs, Rio Grande Canyon, Taos, New Mexico, 1922	34
In the Foothills, Desert beyond, 1922	52
The Danes' cabin, Del Monte Ranch, 1922	74
Lawrence and Frieda outside their house on Del Monte Ranch, 1922-23	74
Frieda Lawrence on her pet horse Azul	84
Knud Merrild in Taos Indian Pueblo, New Mexico, 1923	118
Living-room in Lawrence's cabin. Above mantel is a water-colour copy by Lawrence	128
D. H. Lawrence and Frieda Lawrence with Pips on the porch, Del Monte Ranch, 1922-23	160
Knud Merrild with his first rabbit at Del Monte. Note Mabel's scarf, and cap made by Frieda	178

Desert and Mountains. New Mexico, 1922 . . .	240
Knud Merrild and Scotty, Taos, New Mexico, 1922	266
Frieda Lawrence at Atlixcomex, 1923 . . .	292
Knud Merrild, Del Monte Ranch, New Mexico 1922-23. (Grew a beard living in the mountains)	306
Lawrence, the two Danes and a friend . . .	322

FOREWORD

Soon after Lawrence's death books about him began to appear, many books; and many were the requests made to me to write my book about him. But I refused. In five years there were a dozen or more books about Lawrence. Then friends of Lawrence and myself pointed out that the mass of writings about Lawrence was a mass of contradictions; and they again asked me to write about him. And I said: "Nobody can tell us anything about him that he hasn't told better himself. For those who can read there is nothing to be added. And besides, who would care to read—another book on Lawrence?"

Then I was told that I owed it to Lawrence to tell my story of him. I had not considered that point of view. Had it become my duty to Lawrence, my mission, to tell my story? Perhaps these other books, good, bad or indifferent, had made it necessary for me, had made it a duty for me to write? It wasn't clear to me—but rather than seem to the few whom I knew to shirk my duty to Lawrence, I would take the risk of facing the ridicule of the many unknown to me. And then I recalled that Lawrence had once said to me, "If you ever in any way can profit by my name, you are welcome to do so." I felt that all I could do was to try. I do not, however, pretend that this is the *book of books* about Lawrence, nor a challenge to all the other books. I have not read them all. And if there is a challenge here and there, it is because it couldn't be helped.

Being a painter I did not know how to start writing a book. I simply began writing of an incident that stood out very clearly in my memory, thinking I would write of each such incident by itself and then piece them all together. I wrote in my spare time, and when half a year had elapsed I discovered that I was still writing and rewriting that first incident. If I was going to do it at all, I was going to do it well. But presently it was clear to me that this attempt to be "literary" might have the result that the job would never be finished. And then, too, I remembered Lawrence saying once: "All that arty and literary crew, I know them, they are smoking, steaming shits. . . . I feel I never want to see an artist again while I live." I didn't want to belong to this category. I discarded all I had done, and realized that I would have to write with ease, as naturally as if I was just telling my story to a small group of friends, telling what I remembered, what happened, and what was said and done. Such a record may contain many trivialities, but our life together was *everyday* and not all *Grand Opera*. Every day is not always flattering, neither is truth. But, as H. C. Ørsted has said: "Our wishes ought not to determine what we shall accept as truth." And with that in mind I have done my best to recreate experiences that have lived with me through twelve years and then been sifted for another three in writing. Now after fifteen years they have finally reached the present state.

I have not attempted a critical literary study, nor a psycho-analysis of Lawrence. I am neither a critic nor a psychologist. I have kept to narrative, as far as I can, about our daily life and its happenings, and when I write of thoughts and ideas, I have let Lawrence speak.

When it came to quoting from memory what Lawrence had said in our talks, I hesitated. I dared not depend on my

memory. I had such veneration and respect for him. Just one little word misplaced or lagging might destroy the beauty of the sentence, alter its meaning and its significance. If my book was to have any value at all, I must make it as accurate as possible. Then I remembered that Lawrence wrote as he spoke, wrote conversations down in his books or "talked" the thoughts and ideas in his books. What then could be more logical than to quote him direct from his books? Then indeed his talk would be authentic, and perhaps of some value to students of Lawrence. And so I read the books that Lawrence had written at that time, and I found his daily talk and experiences clearly recognizable in those books. It was obvious to me then that I should not try to recreate or rewrite what he had said, when I could quote direct from his books, letting him speak with his own words. He wrote, it is true, about actual people under fictitious names: but I knew some of these people, and years before, Frieda Lawrence had enlightened me about others; and so I quote direct from his books, inserting the real, instead of the fictitious, names. Arguments with Frieda, for instance, appear in "Kangaroo": why, then, should I recreate, when I could quote direct his own words and feelings?

That is the method I have followed on numerous subjects that he discussed. Art and artists, my Gauguin pilgrimage, etc., were very frequently discussed: the result of these discussions I later found crystallized in his writings. To quote Lawrence is to quote his books. To know him, read his books. These extracts, in conjunction with our actual experiences, take on a new significance and, I hope, justify this book. I shall be very happy if I have added, however little, to a better or fuller understanding of D. H. Lawrence.

My grateful thanks are due to Messrs. Heinemann and to Mrs. Frieda Lawrence for permission to quote extensively from D. H. Lawrence's published works; without their generous permission this book could not have been written. I wish to acknowledge also to Messrs. Secker and Warburg their kind permission to quote from Mabel Luhan's "Lorenzo in Taos" and Horace Gregory's "Pilgrim of the Apocalypse."

K. M.

COPENHAGEN, *May* 1938

P R E F A C E

By ALDOUS HUXLEY

THE New Mexican is an inhuman landscape. Man is either absent (less than half a million people inhabit a territory twice the size of England and Wales) or, if present, seems oddly irrelevant. Nowhere are his works an essential part of the scene; nowhere has he succeeded in imposing his stamp upon the country. His little essays in agriculture and building are negligible accidents in a world whose essential reality is the desert and the mountain. Paradoxically enough, the chief result of man's interference with the New Mexican landscape has been to make it even more alien and anti-human than nature originally intended it. By deforesting the lower slopes and overgrazing the pastures above the timber line, the settlers have succeeded, within the past two generations, in increasing the area of desert and intensifying its aridity. Human interference has led to the further dehumanizing of the landscape. Land which used to be covered with grass and shaded with trees is now a bare expanse of rock and sand, thinly fledged with a growth of sage-brush and cactus.

Parched and almost incandescent under the sun, the deserts lie like great floors at the feet of the mountains. Wherever you look a blue serrated ridge shuts in the horizon and above the peaks enormous dramas of cloud silently unfold themselves against the blue. Fifteen hundred feet above the desert floor you climb, at about eight thousand feet, into the forest; and here a new kind of inhuman

alienness envelops you. Behind and below you lies the desert; but above is a world that at moments seems positively Nordic. In the mountain valleys, where the streams come down, you find yourself suddenly in Germany. Stretches of green-sward dotted with poplars and tall pale aspen trees, and in the background the dark pines and spruces. . . . One is reminded of those coloured illustrations in *Jugend*, before the War. Between this sentimental Teutonic inhumanity and the ferocious American inhumanity of the desert below, there is no middle term. And in this fact consists, precisely, the charm of the New Mexican landscape—its charm and also its horror. For, at least to the visiting European, it has both. After a lifetime passed in a world in which the very air is thick with historical associations, what a relief to find oneself living where nothing has ever happened, where the land is untameable and where nature either ignores its human parasites or is actively hostile towards them! What a relief! But, in another mood, how depressing and wearisome! How urgently, sometimes, from the midst of this vast and magnificent alienness, one longs for a sight of one of those humanized, man-modified landscapes of Europe. For the park-like beauty of England seen through its veils of mournfully pensive haze. For the composed and classical nobility of Provence. For the plane geometry of the polders and the uncompromizing solid geometry of Dutch farms lifting their high pyramidal forms from the green of the flat meadows. How one longs, I repeat! But in vain. New Mexico is almost as empty and as alien as the moon.

Lawrence passed his time in New Mexico on the fringes of the forest, between the inhuman Nordic sentimentality of aspen and tannenbaum, and the equally inhuman emptiness of the bright desert, the sky, the Rocky Mountains. In later years, he often talked of the place—talked with a mixture of love and dislike; nostalgically longing to be

back again in that ferociously virgin world of drought and storm, and at the same time resenting its alienness and lunar vacancy. In the all too human surroundings of Tuscany or southern France he would long for the undomesticated desert; but at the same time he knew that, if he were to return to it, he would pine again for what he had left behind. Like most other human beings, he found that, undiluted, the works of God are really too much of a good thing. "What man has made of man" is mainly deplorable; but what man has made of nature is often a great improvement on the original. For most men a "return to nature" seems good when it is a temporary holiday from too much civilization; a permanent return to nature is a torture. It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the Wordsworthian God. Wordsworth himself, of course, was never in the smallest danger of doing so. The Lake District isn't undomesticated nature, wasn't even at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In New Mexico, on the other hand, it is still possible to fall into the hands of the Wordsworthian God. Hence Lawrence's ambivalent attitude towards the country—the dislike that mingled with the love, the dread that accompanied his homesickness.

In the present volume Mr. Merrild has given a detailed account of the first winter that Lawrence spent in New Mexico. But the book is at the same time much more than the story of a few not specially eventful months. It is a portrait of Lawrence—perhaps the most vivid, the most objective and, one might say, the most disinterested yet produced. Most of the accounts of Lawrence hitherto published have been by women. In their own way some of these accounts have been quite excellent; but with the exception, remarkably enough, of Frieda Lawrence's, they have conspicuously failed to display this precious quality of disinterestedness. Because their authors have seen themselves in the part of mother, of lover, or, in Philip Heseltine's

phrase, of "holy woman," they have tended to adopt a kind of proprietary attitude towards their subject. They write as though they had invented and patented Lawrence; as though they had composed him, copyrighted him and deposited him in the British Museum and the Library of Congress; as though no D. H. Lawrence were genuine without their signature upon the bottle. It is a pleasant change to read this description of the man by one whose friendship and admiration were tempered by no maternal, or romantic possessiveness, no devotional sense of proprietorship.

TAOS

AFTER a long grind uphill, we finally reached the summit of Raton Pass, at an altitude of 8790 feet. We stopped to let the car cool off and got out to stretch our legs and take a look at the land of our provisional destination.

Before starting the car for the descent, we read the following in our guide-book, the book that had led us across the country from New York: "At the summit, the state line dividing Colorado and New Mexico is crossed. The next seven miles lead across a timber-clad ridge, over rolling grades, in a very winding but safe descent to Raton. The balance of this route extends through irrigated farming districts and over vast prairies where stock raising is the leading industry. Large mountain ranges are always visible to the west and splendid scenery predominates on the entire trip.

"This is a section of National Old Trails Road (red, white and blue marker)."

We arrived in Raton after a thrilling but safe descent. As we were soon to leave the main highway and take a little-used trail to Taos, our guide-book was no longer of any use, so we drove into a garage to obtain information. In those days, Taos was little known, and consequently the garage people could not help us.

On the street we stopped several people before we at last ran into a man who could tell us something, if not much. As he said, he had not been there himself, but he was pretty sure he knew just about where it was. We would have to take the highway out on the prairie for some miles, out to where it had a kind of a kink in it. "And there," he said, "just there you will find a trail running into the prairie. You just follow that trail till you get there. It will take you clear across the prairie, where you run into forest and later come to a lake. Then you cross

some mountains, and when you get down on the other side, into the desert—pronto, you are in Taos. Just about two days' ride, I reckon. All you have to do is to stay on the trail. You can't miss it!"

"All right, thank you very much for the information. We will get there all right." And on these flimsy instructions, we started out on our way to Taos.

A highway has many crooked angles when one starts to look for them, but as there were no trails at the bends, we just rolled on till we found what we thought was "it"; and as there was nobody to ask out here, we simply took the trail and followed it into the prairie. It was bumpy travelling. We had to take it easy, and slowly, very slowly, we progressed into the seemingly endless vastness of yellow grass.

At midday we stopped, brought out our provisions, put a cloth on the ground and spread the food on it. With the prairie as table, the sky as ceiling, and the mountains on the horizon as walls, we lunched, as we said, "in God's Cafeteria." How much more impressive than the finest Automat in New York—the peace and stillness compared with the rush at lunch time in New York.

Money in the slot, elbows in the side, coffee spilling on the tray, gulping down the food, hurry, get up and get out, hurry back to work, hurry up on the job, hurry to the subway at quitting time, shaken and packed in like sardines, hurry in and hurry out.

We ate the last of the watermelons my uncle had given us in Dakota. Stretched on our backs in the grass, we smoked our cigarettes in inexpressible content.

In the middle of the afternoon we came to the end of the trail. It had taken us to a large ranch house.

"Well, it looks as though we are lost," we both said at the same time. "But who cares? It looks pretty nice here. Let's have a look; there must be someone around who can put us on the right road."

We entered the estate. It was a huge hacienda. Everything seemed to be asleep in the stillness of the afternoon. We looked through an open window into a room, apparently

the Boss's den. The walls were covered with weapons of all sorts: sabres and knives, pistols, revolvers and rifles, and belts with ammunition—quite a collection. We knocked on the door but there was no answer, so we took the outside stairs up to the balcony and entered through an open door into a long hall.

"Anybody home?" we shouted, as we walked to the other end of the hall, where the door was also open. We looked into the cosy patio and sang a hello, but only the echo of our own voices rang back. We went down and around to the stables, where we at last met a man with brown skin, a black moustache, blue overalls and a huge hat.

"Hello there," we said, and asked about the road.

The man shook his head and said, "Mex, Mex, no savvy, me no Americano."

"What is he saying?" I asked Gótzsche.

"He is a Mexican and can't speak English," he answered. And then spoke to him in Italian, only to get a "me no savvy" for an answer.

As we turned around to walk off, the Mex shouted, "cigarettes, cigarettes."

Well, maybe that would make him understand; but "Gracias, gracias" and "adios" was all we got out of him, despite our efforts in English, Italian and German, and so we bade him good-bye in Danish. He had a likeable face, naïve, and he was quite picturesque.

We started Lizzie and drove back on the trail. After half an hour's ride or so, we met a cowboy out on the prairie. He told us about the road and, as we were about to start off, he continued: "Of course there is another road too, fifty miles shorter, through the Pass, but it is so narrow that two cars can't pass one another on a stretch of several miles, and when it happens that two cars meet there, there is always the question of who is to back out. Oh, lots of fights have gone on in there and shooting, too. It's mostly tough guys who take a chance on that road, but you suit yourselves about it. It's pretty rough, too, but as I say, it's fifty miles shorter."

Before we reached the fork in the road, we had decided

to take the "happy-go-lucky" way, as we had already lost so much time, and so we started for the Pass. Soon we had the vast prairie behind us and reached the mountains. Without hesitation, we entered the narrow pass but, looking at one another, we said, "Well, here we go! Good luck!"

It was a rather exciting drive, and to make it more so, we dug up titles in our memory such as "The Secret of the Pass," "The Hold-up in the Mountain Pass," "The Stampede through the Pass," etc., etc.

It was cold in there, and darkness began to fall, but jokingly we continued our slow drive over the rough road. It was terribly exciting. We were out for adventure, and now we were in it. And before we knew it, we came out into mountainous forest, beautiful in the gorgeous colours of the Fall, more so as the setting sun trimmed the landscape in gold.

Soon we came upon a stream. We turned off the road and followed the stream into the depths of the forest, away from the main road, and when we stopped and pitched camp, it was dark. A lovely night, alone in the mountain forest.

In the morning we made a very interesting discovery. Our camp was at the very edge of a beaver colony and we had been in danger all night and still were. Not from the beavers, but from several huge trees around our tent. They were ready to fall with the first wind. The beavers had gnawed them till they were as thin as an hour-glass, and it was a marvel to see the trees balance themselves on their cone shapes. We spent several hours inspecting the lodges and studying the life of these interesting animals before we broke up camp and got started.

The road took us through forests and was almost impassable. It could hardly be called even a trail. The grades were so steep that the car wouldn't make it, and we had to take turns pushing. Occasionally we had to unload the car before she would make the grade. We then carried the load on our backs to the top, making several trips. Despite the fighting of the bad road and its inconveniences, we took it in brilliant humour.

In the afternoon we came into a valley, remembered for two reasons. First, gasoline cost us forty-two cents a gallon, and secondly, because of the beautiful mountain lake—Eagle Nest Lake. We drove along the shore for some time before the trail led us over the mountains again. But not for long. Then it was downhill and we went easily, and before we expected it we had the desert before us—the vast New Mexican desert on the mountain plateau. Here and there were small, square, adobe houses. The sun was warm and the gorgeous cottonwood trees had leaves of gold, or rather chrome yellow, brilliant against a blue sky. We were nearing a village now. It was Taos.

“Look, there comes an Indian, another, and many, in pearl-embroidered moccasins and almost hidden in multi-coloured blankets. There comes one on horseback. The horse is spotted red and white, a pinto, an ornament, his blanket is flickering in the wind.”

In a velour-grey, big, wide-brimmed hat, emerald-green silk around his neck, and in sheepskin trousers, on a brown horse, almost hidden in a dust cloud, a Mexican dashed by.

Slowly we approached the village. “Look, look, look!” Colour, faces, lines and form. Now we are at the Plaza, the heart of the place. We have indeed, before us, a strange picture. Here meet and live, past and present, hand in hand. There the mud houses lean against concrete construction. Horses neigh and autos rattle. Indian men with long hair in braids pass American flappers with boyish bobs. Indian women in high, white buckskin boots and muffled up in shawls, offer a contrast to their white sisters, who in the middle of the day present themselves on the street in evening gowns, stopping short above the knee, silk stockings and high-heeled shoes.

The Spanish and Indian languages jingle in our ears as an accompaniment to this strange spectacle. The day is vanishing, the sun casts its last beams on the white peaks of the mountains on the horizon and makes the snow gleam like diamonds, and then, well, then we are in Taos.

We pitched our tent under a group of cottonwood trees in a field on the outskirts of the village, near the road

leading to the pueblo. Hastily we washed and brushed up, eager to get a closer look at the town, and perhaps to find a vacant studio the same afternoon. We ransacked our luggage and found the letter of introduction we had to Walter Ufer, the painter.

With that in our pocket we walked to the village, wanting to look him up first. As the envelope had no street address, we had to ask our way, but it seemed these people didn't speak or understand English, the reply being, "No savvy"—"No savvy." We did not ask again till we reached the Plaza, thinking we would there meet people who could at least understand what we said. Again we tried a couple of times, with the same "no savvy" for reply. It was getting tiresome and not amusing any more.

Finally we found a person who didn't answer with "no savvy" but with gestures, pointing, and a stream of Spanish, in which were repeated the words, "Ufer House." Apparently here was a person who understood we were looking for Ufer's house; and furthermore, finding that we didn't speak Spanish, he resolutely took one of us by the arm and made gestures for us to follow. We were led to the house by our gallant guide. Thankful for the guidance, we bowed and said, "Gracias, gracias."

I knocked on the door. It was opened by a lady, and I asked for Mr. Ufer.

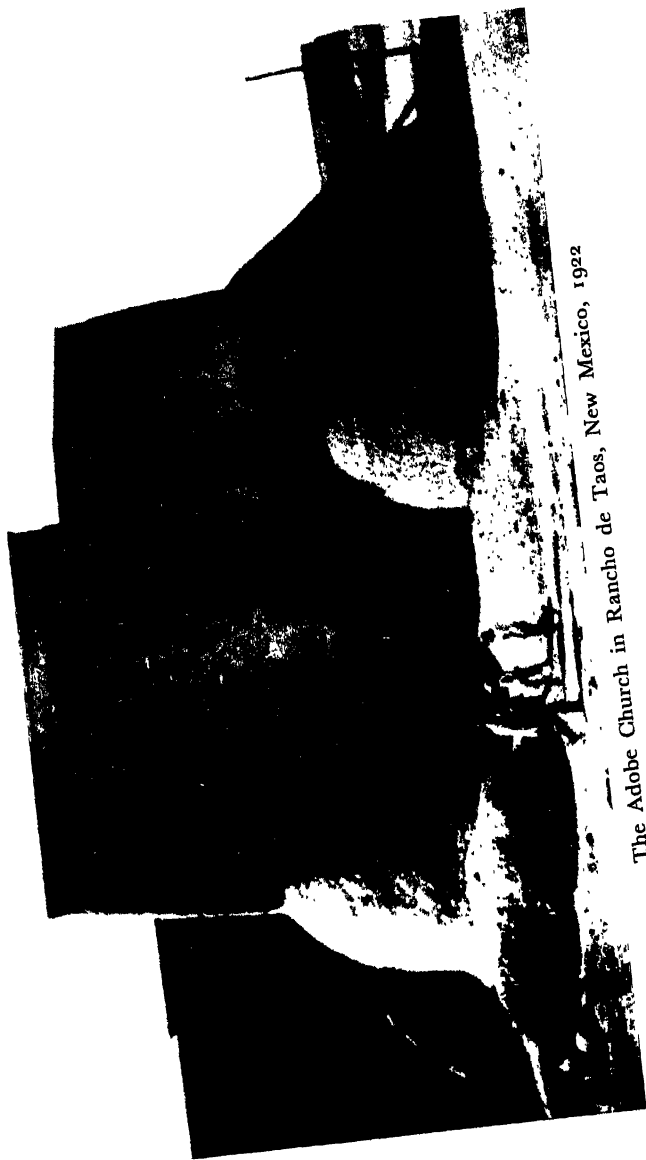
"He is not in," she answered.

"Is Mrs. Ufer in?" I continued.

"Yes, I am Mrs. Ufer."

I introduced ourselves and gave her the letter of introduction.

"Oh, I see," she said, and read the letter. Then she told us that Ufer was very busy working on a large canvas and could not be disturbed, and so we could not be taken to his studio. And furthermore, he did not in general want to meet people, not even artists. Despite the best letters of introduction, it had so often before proved too tiresome, only serving to make Ufer nervous and irritated. However, she would give him the letter, but could not give us much hope of seeing him. "But," she said, "you settle down and



The Adobe Church in Rancho de Taos, New Mexico, 1922

come back, and I will see what I can do for you in the meantime."

Then she called to a person walking by in the street and asked to have us shown to a studio. Then she excused herself. She had a model waiting and was in the midst of painting.

When we reached the Plaza, our guide stopped a woman we met there and talked to her in Spanish. To us he said, "She has a vacant studio. Go with her, and she will show it to you."

As we followed her, we tried to converse on the way, but it was of little use. Her English was so limited that we didn't get anything out of it. Only a short distance from the Plaza, on the road leading to the pueblo, we were led through a gate, across a yard and shown into the studio. We tried very hard to make ourselves understood, but it was a complete failure. She smiled, said something and left us alone, but before we knew what it was all about she came back with a young girl, her daughter, a cute, bashful little girl of about fifteen, as interpreter. It didn't take long before we came to an understanding, and paid a month's rent in advance.

Then we went to our camping place, loaded the tent and outfit on the car and brought it to our new abode. Our studio was one of two in an adobe house. It was just a square room with whitewashed walls, without any conveniences at all, not even a closet; very primitive indeed. But as we had been living for months in a tent, we didn't mind it. Of furniture, there was only a table, a washstand, one chair and one single bed. We didn't argue about which of us should occupy the bed. I flipped a coin, and Gótzsche won the bed. I then put up my camping cot, and we installed our camping outfit and cooking utensils and were settled.

It felt good to be settled and as we stretched out on our beds, smoking a pipe, we talked about the day and of tomorrow. We agreed heartily that if Mrs. Ufer thought we would come back and PERHAPS be allowed to meet that husband of hers, she was greatly mistaken. Who was that

fellow anyway? An artist, yes, and so were we. Now he would have to come to us. And so we talked, perhaps a little peeved at not being received with open arms right away, as we had been accustomed to being received on our trip across the country. But we really didn't care. Here we were, far away in a strange country, a country that was still "wild and woolly," with Mexicans and Indians whose language we didn't understand, in a queer but picturesque village. How exciting!

Without warning, the door was flung open and a bespectacled man with a moustache, seemingly dressed in leather, burst in. He stopped in the middle of the room, pointing to an easel and saying, "That's mine. It doesn't belong to the studio. I'm the artist next door and don't want any noise. Understand?" He slammed the door and was gone.

"Hello and good-bye," we said and laughed. "He can be lots of fun. One of these temperamental artists!"

We went for a walk and bought some groceries for supper. Gótzsche prepared the meal when we came back. I washed the dishes, and we again stretched out on our backs, smoking, watching the flickering flame of the candle throwing shadows around, meditating, just saying a word now and then, content and enjoying ourselves. Outside, it was pitch dark.

It was about eight o'clock when someone outside fumbled at our door and, before any of us had time to get up, came into the room. It was our painter neighbour again, saying, "Are you the Danes?" We looked at the intruder, one of us answering with an "Is that any-of-your-business-attitude?—Well—yes."

He then introduced himself as Walter Ufer, apologizing for his wife's reserve and his own precipitancy that afternoon. He and Mrs. Ufer would like to have us go with him to his house for a cup of tea. With a little reserve, we accepted. Seeing this, he said, "Do you like schnapps?"—and not waiting for an answer, he continued, "Sure you do. All Danes like schnapps. I have some White Mule at the house. We will have a welcoming drink and say 'skaal.' Come on, let's go."

I blew out the candle and Ufer turned his flashlight on. It flashed right on the easel and he said, "As long as you are here, you must use that easel as if it were your own. I don't need it."

Chatting, we reached the house and were heartily greeted by Mrs. Ufer, who also apologized for her reserve at our afternoon meeting. "But you see"—and so on—and politely we returned, "You have nothing to apologize for, my dear Mrs. Ufer. We are, etc., etc."

We stayed till two or three in the morning, which should be explanatory enough. We had so much to talk about that we nearly forgot the schnapps, but we had a couple before we left.

It became a habit with Ufer to come and get us over in the evening for a cup of tea. He was President or Corresponding Secretary for the Taos Artist Group. There were letters to be answered almost every day. This correspondence he answered as soon as he had finished his supper. Then he took the letters to the post office and on his way back, he would drop in on us and persuade us to come with him and have a cup of tea. The time of his arrival would depend upon the number of letters he had to answer. One evening it was so late that we had gone to bed when he came, and we refused to go with him, but somehow he got started on a discussion, so we became fully awake. We got up finally and went with him to his house, to fight out our ideas over the customary cup of tea.

In our ideas on life and society we would agree and disagree. But on art we would rarely agree and always fight. We were too radically modern for Ufer. We had many lovely fights. "You boys are crazy," he would say. And on one occasion he continued, "I think you ought to meet a modern Englishman who is in Taos now. He is a writer, and world famous too. Although he is not as crazy as you are, he is crazy enough."

We told him we didn't want to meet crazy famous people and least of all a writer. Writers don't understand painters anyway. So there was no more talk about that until some days later, when he invited us to a turkey dinner, saying

there would be a couple we had not met before. We asked him who they were and with a smile he said, "The writer you don't want to meet, and his wife, Baroness von Richthofen." We tried to back out, but could not disappoint him and accepted. The old warrior gave us a triumphant smile and promised us a real evening with lots of spiritual fights.

When the evening came, we put on our best clothes. They were quite crumpled from being packed in a suitcase for several months, despite our efforts to straighten them out. We had pressed our trousers by sleeping on them the previous night, so they would show something of a crease, but we were far from "tailor-made" when we made our entrance at the Ufer house.

The other two guests had already arrived. We were introduced to Mr. and Mrs. D. H. Lawrence. There was nothing startling about meeting these people. They were very simple, pleasing and obliging. Mr. Lawrence made no greater impression than did Mrs. Lawrence, only we were glad to see a man with a full-grown beard. In the midst of America's baby-faced men, it was so homelike. That it was red, or rather reddish brown, was perhaps an added attraction. He was tall, thin and kindly. Mrs. Lawrence was round and motherly, sitting in a chair and beaming. He, Lawrence, walked the floor. We just chatted casually till the dinner was served.

I knew next to nothing about Lawrence, only what Olaf Olesen and Mrs. Ufer had told me about him and his works. They were both Lawrence enthusiasts, but despite their repeated efforts to have me read him, I had not done so. Neither had Gotzsche. All we knew was that he was English, and we remembered some of the titles of his books.

Lawrence talked to Mrs. Ufer about gravy, dressing and other cookery. I took it as just politeness to the hostess. Gótsche joined the conversation, but that was natural. He had become a good cook on our camping tour, and was interested. My only experience was in washing dishes, and neither that nor cooking interests me. I listened to Mrs. Lawrence and Ufer, saying nothing.

When we got seated at the dinner table, the conversation was mostly about Australia, from which the Lawrences had just arrived, making a stopover at Tahiti.

I was anxious to hear some first-hand information about the beloved South Seas and had been dreaming of making a Gauguin pilgrimage. Elated, I asked him how he liked the Islands. But my dreams were shattered right there and then. He certainly did not like them at all. The people were ugly, false, spoiled and diseased. And the so-called blue Pacific, not blue at all, but a big, drowsy, grey and weary emptiness; and those whispering, poetic palms, just a lot of dirty feather dusters. Nothing to go there for at all.

He also told us about the life on board the liner and about the passengers. There had been some people from the film colony in Hollywood, homeward bound from making pictures in the South Seas. Thrown close together on the ship, with lots of time, Lawrence could not help but observe how they carried on. He had plenty of time to watch and register their behaviour. He was shocked at their wild and unrestrained, carefree love-making. As he was telling us about it, he became absolutely infuriated. Not only their distasteful love-making in the open, to the disgust of other passengers, but also their absolute lack or neglect of simple form, no breeding whatsoever. How perfectly awful it all was. Before the voyage was over he had had a scene with some of them.

"Yes, and they jeered at you," Mrs. Lawrence interrupted. "You should not lay yourself open to people of that kind. They are not worth it. It is the school teacher in you; but the naughty, adult children just jeer at you. Many times I have suffered when they drew you out, just to see 'your goods,' and then they jeer, and you, too, suffer. You must not do it, Lorenzo."

"What do you think of Taos, or New Mexico?" Mrs. Ufer asked.

"It is all rather like comic opera played with solemn intensity," Lawrence replied. "All the wildness and woolliness and westernity and motor cars and art and sage and

savage are so mixed up, so incongruous, that it is a farce, and everybody knows it. But they refuse to play it as a farce. The wild and woolly sections insist on being heavily dramatic, bold and bad on purpose; the arts insist on being real American and artistic; motor cars insist on being thrilled, moved to the marrow; high-brows insist on being ecstatic; Mexicans insist on being Mexicans, squeezing the last black drop of macabre joy out of life; and Indians wind themselves in white cotton sheets like Hamlet's father's ghost, with a lurking smile.

"And here am I, a low-born Englishman, tumbled out of the known world of the British Empire on to this stage: for it persists in seeming like a stage to me, and not like the proper world.

"Whatever makes a proper world, I don't know. But surely two elements are necessary: a common purpose and a common sympathy. I can't see any common purpose. The Indians and Mexicans don't even seem very keen on dollars. That full moon of a silver dollar doesn't strike me as overwhelmingly hypnotic out here. As for a common sympathy or understanding, that's beyond imagining. West is wild and woolly and bad on purpose, commerce is a little self-conscious about its own pioneering importance—Pioneers, oh Pioneers! High-brow is bent on getting to the bottom of everything and saving the last soul down there in the depths; Mexican is bent on being Mexican and not yet Gringo; and the Indian is all the things that all the others aren't. And so everybody smirks at everybody else, and says tacitly: 'Go on. You do your little stunt, and I'll do mine'—and they're like the various troupes in a circus, all performing at once, with nobody for Master of Ceremonies.

"It seems to me, in this country, everything is taken so damn seriously that nothing remains serious. Nothing is so farcical as insistent drama. Everybody is lurkily conscious of this. Each section or troupe is quite willing to admit that all the other sections are buggoon stunts. But it itself is the real thing, solemnly bad in its badness, good in its goodness, wild in its wildness, woolly in its

woolliness, arty in its artiness, deep in its depths—in a word, earnest.

"In such a masquerade of earnestness, a bewildered traveller out of the far-flung British Empire is myself! Don't let me for a moment pretend to know anything. I know less than nothing. I simply gasp like a bumpkin in a circus ring, with the horse lady leaping over my head, the Apache war whooping in my ear, the Mexican staggering under crosses and thorns and bumping me as he goes by, the artist whirling colours across my dazzled vision, the high-brows solemnly declaiming at me from the cross-roads.

"One has to take sides. First, one must be either pro-Mexican or pro-Indian; then, either art or intellect; then, Republican or Democrat; and so on. But as for me, poor lost lamb, if I bleat at all in the circus ring, it will be my own shorn lonely bleat of a lamb who's lost his mother."

After dinner the conversation went into more heated discussions, in which Lawrence showed his superiority in fighting with thoughts and words. Mrs. Ufer was understanding and Ufer stubborn. He brought Lawrence to fury, seemingly a secret delight for him. Gotzsche and I were mainly listeners. Of this, the first meeting with Lawrence, I also remember that he said, "The art of painting is dead," and he called his host an ass and Georg Brandes, the Danish literary critic, an old fool.

If Gótsche and I hadn't talked much at the party, we talked when we got back to our studio, taking sides for and against the various ideas that had been expressed during the evening. We admired Lawrence for his brilliance and skill in pure discussion, even though at times he seemed paradoxical. We liked him for his fearlessness and honesty and agreed we had had a fine evening. Mrs. Lawrence we liked, too, because she was a personality herself, and not just a shadow of her bright writer-husband's opinions.

A week or so later, we got an invitation to go with the Ufers to a dinner-party at the Lawrences'. We were pleasantly surprised, although we couldn't understand why he should have invited us. We couldn't possibly have made an impression on him at that first meeting, and we couldn't

see any reason for sheer politeness. We tried to see why. Perhaps he wanted to know us as painters, but there were plenty of other painters in Taos. Of course they were all more or less conservative, and we were looked upon as radicals. We thought of other possible reasons, without arriving at a clear understanding. But remembering the vivid and interesting evening we had had, we accepted the invitation without any further self-questioning.

When the evening came, we arrived at Lawrence's house with the Ufers. There were two other guests, two women—a lean one and a fat one, both at the dangerous age. The Lawrences greeted us heartily and we were introduced. Lawrence was very busy. He talked, tended the fire in the fireplace, went to the kitchen to cut bread, went to the stove, saying to his wife, "A little more and it will be done"—came into the room again, talking and lighting the candles on the table, going to the kitchen again, saying, "I will make the gravy."

I thought he was a funny fellow; he amused me. I don't like housework. The table was colourful and gay. I can still see the many different dishes and the candlesticks. About the dinner itself, and the conversation, I remember nothing.

After dinner we all went into the big room and got seated. There were only a few pieces of clumsy furniture. The two women, apparently good friends, curled themselves up on the couch like toy cats. And as there were not enough chairs to go around, Gótzsche and I shared a seat on a low bench.

The conversation went from one thing to another, but the women managed to turn it to sex repeatedly. Lawrence discussed it rather impatiently. Then Ufer took the floor with a sexy story. It was not well placed, and he did it so clumsily that everybody was horrified and shocked. Embarrassed, nobody knew where to look and closed up like clams. A very unpleasant silence fell upon the room. Then Lawrence broke the silence by saying, "Now I think it is The Danes' turn to entertain the party." And at once, all eyes landed on us, glad to find an anchor-ground after

the salty story. This unexpected concentration upon us was not very pleasant and, bewildered, we did not answer.

Lawrence then said, "Why do you travel?"

We were a little timid, and hesitated with an answer, but he repeated the question and one of us said, "To see."

"To see what?" he asked.

"To see Nature."

"To see Nature," he repeated.

"Yes, and people and things."

He was eager to get a new atmosphere into the room, but as we had been taken by surprise, we were not the ones to renew the conversation, which he sensed quickly and began to tell the group why these two young men had travelled thousands of miles from home to see the world—a world that had nothing to offer, and to see things that didn't amount to much.

"You are travelling, too, Mr. Lawrence," put in Mrs. Ufer. "Why do you travel?"

"Quite," he replied. He did not give a direct answer but continued:

"Superficially, the world has become small and known. Poor little globe of earth, the tourists trot round you as easily as they trot round the Bois or round Central Park. There is no mystery left, we've been there, we've seen it, we know all about it. We've done the globe, and the globe is done.

"This is quite true, superficially. On the superficies, horizontally, we've been everywhere and done everything, we know all about it. Yet the more we know, superficially, the less we penetrate, vertically. It's all very well skimming across the surface of the ocean, and saying you know all about the sea. There still remain the terrifying under-deeps, of which we have utterly no experience.

"The same is true of land travel. We skim along, we get there, we see it all, we've done it all. And as a rule, we never once go through the curious film which railroads, ships, motor cars, and hotels stretch over the surface of the whole earth. Peking is just the same as New York, with a few different rights to look at; rather more Chinese about,

etc. Poor creatures that we are, we crave for experience, yet we are like flies that crawl on the pure and transparent mucous-paper in which the world, like a bonbon, is wrapped so carefully that we can never get at it, though we see it there all the time as we move about it, apparently in contact, yet actually as far removed as if it were the moon.

"As a matter of fact, our great-grandfathers, who never went anywhere, in actuality had more experience of the world than we have, who have seen everything. When they listened to a lecture with lantern slides, they really held their breath before the unknown, as they sat in the village schoolroom. We, bowling along in a rickshaw in Ceylon, say to ourselves: 'It's very much what you'd expect.' We really know it all.

"We are mistaken. The know-it-all state of mind is just the result of being outside the mucous-paper wrapping of civilization. Underneath is everything we don't know and are afraid of knowing.

"I realized this with shattering force when I went to New Mexico. New Mexico, one of the United States, part of the U.S.A., New Mexico, the picturesque reservation and playground of the Eastern states, very romantic. Old Spanish, Red Indian, desert mesas, pueblos, cowboys, penitentes, all that film stuff. Very nice, the great Southwest, put on a sombrero and knot a red kerchief round your neck, to go out in the great free spaces!

"That is New Mexico, wrapped in the absolutely hygienic and shiny mucous-paper of our trite civilization. That is the New Mexico known to most of the Americans who know it all. But break through the shiny sterilized wrapping, and actually *touch* the country, and you will never be the same again."

Somehow the atmosphere had been poisoned, and the conversation did not seem to be able to go on and the party quickly broke up.

As Lawrence had expressed a desire to see our paintings, we wanted to be obliging. And so, in return for the dinner at his house, we invited the Lawrences to a tea-party at our primitive atelier. We told them beforehand that it

would be very simple, but without hesitation they gladly accepted. And to Lawrence, I said, "We want to show *you* that the art of painting is *not* dead, but very much alive." He smiled with indulgent expectancy and anticipation.

In our little household, Gótzsche was the cook and I the chambermaid. The day of our party, I cleaned the studio more thoroughly than usual and made the beds as neat as possible with their army-blanket covers. We literally covered all the white adobe walls in the studio with our early and recent paintings. It was quite a show.

The table was set with our only two tin cups, two old jelly glasses, and dishes from our camping outfit. For seats, we had only one chair, two painter's canvas stools and a wooden box. The washstand, our kitchen, had been cleared to make room for our camp stove. The water steamed from the kettle when the Lawrences made their entrance.

We bade them welcome and shook hands. Hastily, Lawrence looked at the walls and said, "I really can't bear to look at pictures!"

"Well, that's too bad for you," one of us replied, smilingly.

Mrs. Lawrence rebuked him severely and said the pictures were very nice. And, in an exuberant voice, "Oh look, Lorenzo, look at the tea-table. How charming!"

He agreed readily.

Gótzsche started to make the tea and I followed the Lawrences around the room, looking at the paintings. It was comforting to have Mrs. Lawrence there. Happily and smilingly she looked at the pictures. "Oh, I adore that one," or, "That one is very, very nice," and so on. Not that she indiscriminately liked everything. She had her dislikes, too, but it was never offensive. She showed a very genuine response.

Lawrence, on the contrary, was opposed and seemed to have his fixed ideas, preventing him from spontaneous response. He disliked most of our work and some of it was even repulsive to him. "It bores me to look at paintings," he said. "Why do you have to paint? There

are enough paintings in the world, the art of painting is dead."

"Tea is served," Gótzsche said, so we had to be seated. Our very primitive tea-table was an amused delight to Lawrence. Mrs. Lawrence enjoyed it, too, saying, "How perfectly wonderful!" Sitting down, she glanced about at her surroundings and continued, saying, "You do keep your place neat, even the floor; and the beds, how tidy."

Lawrence nodded his head in approval. The conversation over the tea flowed freely and with a high spirit. I was glad to feel they genuinely enjoyed it. We had in common that we were strangers in a queer place, and talked gossip, travel, art and what-not. When the tea was over and they were about to leave, I fired my last shot at Lawrence, saying, "I have some decorative drawings I would like to show you." And like a good fellow he tried to look interested.

Gótzsche and I had been doing some poster work together (24-sheet posters) for a film company in New York, and had also made some cover designs and other things. I also showed them some of my own designs for ceramics, vignettes and book-plates.

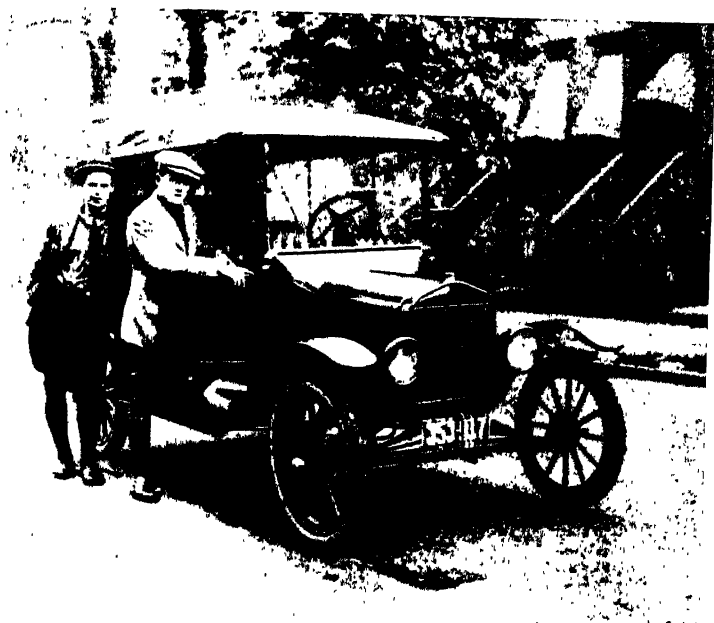
Lawrence became really interested, and before they left, he had asked me if I would care to make some designs for his books and also to illustrate his "Birds, Beasts and Flowers." I knew he meant it when he said it, and we talked excitedly about it at great length. Naturally, it made me happy, but just the same, I didn't dare believe in its actual realization. When they finally left, they could just get home in time for dinner and they asked us to drop in and see them whenever we felt like it.

Gótzsche and I agreed we had enjoyed the afternoon, and we liked them both; and after he had shown his interest in our decorative work, we didn't quite take him seriously in his dislike for paintings. He just had to be in opposition. He might be really bored by looking at pictures in studios and having to express his opinion, which would be quite natural, but deep inside, he had an interest, of course.

It had been interesting to meet him and his wife; but as the ring of parties had now been completed, we con-



Knud Merrild in the Dane's Taos Studio, 1922



The Danes and their faithful Lizzie

sidered this our last meeting with Lawrence. Just another name added to the list of people one meets in "a year and a day," when travelling. We saw no reason to carry the acquaintance any farther, especially as we had planned to leave Taos in the very near future. We had to get on our way toward California, and reach Arizona before the snow would cover the mountain passes and block the road. And so, an hour after Lawrence left our studio, it was decided he belonged to the past, to pleasant memories.

Fate had something else in store for us. In the meanwhile, however, we went about our daily studies, having Indian models in the studio in the afternoon, and painting in the pueblo in the forenoon. I shall never forget the first day we arrived in the pueblo.

With excited expectations, we jumped into our Lizzie and started on the three-mile-ride to the pueblo. Leaving Taos, the road is flanked with tall cottonwood trees, and as this was in the Fall, the trees were at the height of their luxurious beauty. The leaves had all turned yellow and ran from a pale lemon colour through all nuances to a strong chrome yellow. Gorgeous against a blue sky, dotted with white clouds. In a little while, we were entering the desert, a soft, pale, yellowish grey-green blanket of greasewood and sage. The sagebrush scented the air with sweet perfume. Soon we were in Indian territory, and passed over a clear stream of water, not deep, barely reaching the hub of the wheels. Then we came upon the cornfields of the Indians. Donkeys and horses were nibbling on the remains of the harvest. And as we made a turn in the road, we could see the village, yellowish-brown raw sienna in colour, towering above a cluster of trees. There it was, like two pyramids, stepping off into seven stories high at the foot of the majestic Sangre de Cristo Mountains.

An adobe wall encircles the pueblo, and we entered through a gate where we were greeted by a swarm of pigs running loose, and many barking dogs. The air was slightly spiced with incense from burning cedar and pinon. White smoke streamed lazily about the tops of the many roofs. Nobody was in sight. The atmosphere breathed absolute

peace as we stopped the car on the plaza. We got out of the car and sat down on the bank of the river, or creek, that divides the pueblo in two. Our attention was fixed on the top of the furthestmost building. There, high in the air, stood a figure, motionless and silent as a statue, enveloped in a white blanket, guarding the spirit of the pueblo. It was awe-inspiring, and we felt almost like intruders.

It gave us quite a start when a voice unexpectedly said, "Como esta usted?" We turned and looked up. Before us stood an old Indian, wrapped in a not too clean blanket, machine made, once bright red, apparently, but now a faded pink with grey stripes. His hair was white and came down on his chest in two braids. His eyes were mild but firm. His face was very wrinkled, like the inside of a mushroom. His pearl-embroidered moccasins, which had seen better days, were outworn and dirty. But nevertheless, his person radiated a strong aristocracy and kind authority.

We returned his greeting with, "Como esta usted?" and told him in English that we were admiring the beauty of the place. "No savvy," he smiled and spoke to us in Spanish. We shrugged our shoulders and smilingly answered, "No savvy." Then the old man made signs for us to follow him, which we did, anxious to learn what was going to happen. He led us to one of the houses where he stopped and knocked on the door. From the inside, the upper half of the door was opened by a young Indian girl. He spoke to her in the Indian language, whereupon she said something in Spanish to us. As we wanted to be polite and on a good footing with the Indians, I bowed to her and used a phrase I had proudly picked up.

"Ne le comprendo a Ud. Habla Ud inglas?" I had expected a smiling answer, but her face remained unchanged, as she said in English, "Big Chief says you cannot photograph in pueblo," pointing to the camera Gótzsche had strapped over his shoulder. He replied reassuringly that we would not use the camera in the pueblo, but that we would like to ask Big Chief's permission to paint in the pueblo. We were artists who had just arrived and would

of course gladly comply with the rules and regulations of the pueblo. Our interpreter related this to the Chief and then said, "You pay two dollars a day to pueblo, you can take pictures and paint."

"Please understand," one of us said, "we are not tourists or curiosity seekers but artists, poor artists, not much money, would like very much to paint in pueblo but cannot pay two dollars a day."

When the girl rendered this to the old man, his kind face took on a peremptory expression, and we knew our remonstrance had failed. The girl looked important and said, "Big Chief has spoken!"

When we got back to Taos, we told Ufer about it and he explained that it was very annoying to the Indians the way many tourists carried on, and they made the charge in order to curb this to some extent. However, he, too, thought it too much to pay two dollars a day and asked us not to do it. He said, "Most of the artists pay five dollars a year, which they gladly do, but can't very well pay any more, and so, if outside artists come in and pay more, it may result in raising the local artists' fee, too, which would not be fair to them."

We then suggested that we would gladly pay half a year's fee for the time we intended to stay in Taos. This agreed upon, Ufer told us to go to the pueblo and talk to the war-chief, who spoke English. "He became a lieutenant in the U.S. Army in the World War. He is a fine fellow. Tell him I sent you."

The next day we called on the war-chief in the pueblo, and told him our story. He was not quite willing at first, so we just forgot about it and started to talk about the war and his experiences in Europe. We smoked several cigarettes together and told him that we had come all the way from Europe, from Denmark, if he knew where that was. Well, not exactly—up north, around Scandinavia some place. He wanted to know about our country. And so we talked and turned again to our question, and he thought our offer pretty fair, but he would have to talk to Big Chief first, and asked us to wait till he came back.

We really hated this bickering about it, but our means were very limited. When the war-chief came back, he said, "I think O.K. you pay five dollars and everything all right."

We paid him and he said, "Come to house, I give you receipt."

Our conference had taken place in the open and we followed him into the house. He asked how long we intended to stay and we told him two weeks, if nothing unforeseen should turn up. With dignity, he made out the receipt. It amused me to find this receipt in my diary a few days ago. This is how it looks:

"TAOS N. MEX, 1922.

Received from K. Merrild Gótzsche \$5.00 for promicion
to paint for 2 week in Pueblo. \$5.00 from J. D. A.
Tente Goo."

The war-chief said, "Now, if you stay longer, it will be all right, but you must have identification, so when you get in to Taos, you go to Gerson store and buy one foot each of light blue silk ribbon and you have that in button-hole when you paint in pueblo. All Indians then know you are all right."

Conscientiously we followed his precept to start with, but we overstayed the two weeks and the light blue silk ribbon got lost; but by that time the Indians knew "The Danes," so it was all right.

We liked the Indians and they were very friendly to us. Often they invited us into their houses. One time we had to climb on outside ladders to the third and fourth floor and then through a hole in the roof, down another ladder leading to the room. It was a queer feeling to enter a house that way, like being in a cell of a honeycomb.

As one could obtain saddle horses for rent in Taos at a fairly reasonable price, Gótzsche and I frequently went horseback riding in the afternoon. One day we started out for a trip to the mountains. There was a beautiful canyon we had not yet seen and wanted to explore. On the edge of the desert, we passed Lawrence's house at a

distance. It happened that Lawrence was pottering around outside the house, but the distance was too far for a hello, so we just waved our arms in the air as we galloped by. Then the unforeseen occurred. The girth on my horse burst, the saddle slid down the horse's side and I slid down to the ground.

Lawrence had watched us and seen my mishap. He shouted across the desert as I quickly got up. "Are you hurt? Do you need any help?"

Emphatically I shouted back, "I'm all right, don't need any help, thank you." To Gótzsche I said in a low voice, "Hurry up and help me get this fixed. I don't want to trouble Lawrence."

"Yes," he replied, "it might look as though we did this on purpose, too."

I had some string in my pocket and we got it fixed fairly well, but before I got back in the saddle, Lawrence stood beside us and inspected the repair.

"I am afraid that won't hold," he said, "you'd better come over to the house and get some stronger string, or a leather strap, so you can fix it securely."

"Oh, this will do, thank you just the same," I said, and swung into the saddle. So did Gótzsche.

"Do be careful," said Lawrence.

"We will," we replied, and reined in the horses, ready to go. We inquired about Mrs. Lawrence and asked to be remembered.

"Where are you going?" he continued.

"Just for an excursion into the canyon," we replied.

"Would you mind if I joined you?"

We looked at one another. We would really rather have gone alone, but politely we said, "No-o."

"Fine," he said, "it will only take me a minute to go to the house and put on my boots. Would you like, in the meantime, to round up the horses, and drive them to the corral?"—pointing to a herd of horses nibbling in the desert.

"With pleasure," we replied, and off we galloped into the desert feeling real "wild west"—our first "round-up."

In the corral, we helped Lawrence to saddle his horse

and off we went together into the desert. We had not expected it to be a lesson in horseback riding, but that is what it turned out to be. Barely had we started before Lawrence criticized our riding—that is, when he caught up with us, for we started out at a gallop, feeling cowboyish.

“Don’t gallop the horses,” he said panting, when he came up alongside. We reined in immediately and broke into a walk. But that was wrong too.

“Don’t walk the horses, but trot them,” he said. “That’s the best gait.”

“Well, there is no fun in that. We’re out to have a good time together with the horses. The horses seem to enjoy galloping, just tearing into space, feeling the joy of their own strength. They are penned up a good deal. We, too, like to feel their strength and speed, and the swish of the wind as we cut into the air—a wonderful feeling of just being alive. We don’t force them to gallop, and really let them walk more than they seem to like, but then we can better perceive the landscape.”

“Very well,” he said, “but we cannot always eat cake. We must also suck lemons. You must learn to trot.” He took it for granted, apparently, that we were beginners. Admittedly, we had not been on horseback much since boyhood, but as for being mere beginners—well, we considered ourselves more than that. We didn’t think he was such a swell figure on a horse either, sitting there stooping forward like a doll. He was riding between us and said:

“Now you must learn trotting. Look at me. Hold your rein like this, sit like me and press your knees and thighs against the horse, become one with the horse and follow his movements so, just like that.”

Like a couple of schoolboys, we tried to copy him, half amused and half annoyed, and when we could bear it no longer, we broke into a gallop. But Lawrence followed up, and persistently preached his trotting business. We sighed with deep relief when we reached and entered the canyon. We were all forced to walk the horses. It was uphill, stony and forest-like. Now the horses could take care of themselves; all we had to look out for was not to get too close

to or under the trees, to be brushed off by a branch or crushed against a tree trunk. Lawrence started to ask us questions, many questions about everything, and "whys" and "wherefores."

Time came for a turn-about and we started downhill. The sky had become a dark indigo, almost black; the clouds were hanging low and had begun sprinkling snowflakes. Sparsely, one by one, the flakes came dancing down, settling on the manes of the horses or coming to rest on the pine trees. We started to sing. Nature was so glorious, so grand!

Lawrence, too, wanted to sing, but didn't know the tune of our Danish song, so he sang his own tune in English. So we rode, goose line, down the canyon, singing the different tunes that fitted our emotions. The single file prohibited a conference on songs that we all might know. But it was rather annoying to sing different tunes together, so when we came to an interval, Lawrence hastily and with great vigour and pathos started to sing "Gaudeamus Igitur." He had struck one we all knew and happily we joined him.

"GAUDEAMUS IGITUR
JUVENES DUM SUMUS } *twice.*
POST JUCUNDAM JUVENTUTEM
POST MOLESTAM SENECTUTEM
NOS HABEBIT HUMUS." *twice.*

None of us remembered all the seven verses, but that did not disturb us. We went on repeating the first verse indefinitely. None of us seemed to tire of singing. We must all have felt that tremendous urge of emotion to be released, in sheer joy of being alive. To be alive through our senses! To be alive to the smell of the warm bodies of the horses, the smell of the coniferous trees! To be alive to the feeling of the live horse beneath, and to the feeling of the snowflakes, gently settling on one's cheeks, melting and running down the face. To breathe the pure air! And to be alive to the sight of beauty all around, and the spirit of the place, and the mystery and wonder of it all. To be alive and, to be alive TOGETHER!

It is not always that which is thought and being said

that keeps men together, but rather, perhaps, that which is not thought and said: the invisible flow; the awareness of one another, in being alive together.

We talked a lot on that first trip into the canyon. I don't remember what about. But I do remember the outburst of spontaneous life-joy we had in common. I remember something which is hard for me to explain: joint feeling of spirit—no, something I know not what. I know the others felt the same. A certain vibration told me so. It was a revelation among us that made itself manifest and laid the foundation for the development of our future friendship.

Before we got out of the canyon, it was snowing hard and the ground became covered with a white blanket. We huddled up in our clothes and Lawrence repeatedly asked us to take care that the horses should not skid in the snow. When we had descended from the foothills into the desert, the snowfall had abated somewhat, and we broke into a trot.

On our way towards home, we passed the pueblo at a slight distance. In the approach of twilight, the white, shrouded figure, always on watch atop the towering mud dwelling, looked fantastic and had an aura of mystery about it. So did the pueblo. We could not help making some remarks about it: the white figure on the top of the building, silhouetted against the dark mountains, and the Indians moving about below—the women carrying water from the creek to the houses in jars on their heads. The whole atmosphere of the pueblo, with its deep roots in the past, always made an impression on us. But I will let Lawrence tell you.

“And if it were sunset, the men swathing themselves in their sheets like shrouds, leaving only the black place of the eyes visible. And women, darker than ever, with shawls over their heads, busy at the ovens. And cattle being driven to sheds. And men and boys trotting in from the fields, on ponies. And as the night is dark, on one of the roofs, or more often on the bridge, the inevitable drum-drum-drum of the tom-tom, and young men in the dark

lifting their voices to the song, like wolves or coyotes crying in music.

"There it is, then, the pueblo, as it has been since Heaven knows when. And the slow, dark weaving of the Indian life going on still, though perhaps more waveringly. And oneself, sitting there on a pony, a far-off stranger with gulfs of time between me and this. And yet, the old nodality of the pueblo still holding, like a dark ganglion spinning invisible threads of consciousness. A sense of dryness, almost of weariness, about the pueblo. And a sense of the inalterable. It brings a sick sort of feeling over me, always, to get into the Indian vibration. Like breathing chlorine."

Or: ". . . go to Taos some brilliant snowy morning and see the white figure on the roof: or come riding through at dusk on some windy evening, when the black skirts of the silent women blow around the white wide boots, and you will feel the old, old root of human consciousness still reaching down to depths we know nothing of, and of which, only too often, we are jealous. It seems it will not be long before the pueblos are uprooted."

It was getting late. The sky hung over our heads like a canopy, the horizon was a light, faint, yellow-green. The sun had just vanished behind the mesa beyond the Rio Grande, and high-lighted the moving clouds in the colours of the rainbow. Taos was just visible as a soft silhouette edged with a golden halo.

Lawrence had persuaded us to stay for supper. When we reached the house, Mrs. Lawrence was looking for us, saying she was beginning to worry about us.

"You are late, aren't you?"

Lawrence said he had invited us for supper.

"How lovely," she said. "Yes, do come," with a reassuring smile.

We followed Lawrence to the corral and then took our own horses to the stables and walked back to Lawrence's. They were busy preparing the supper. Gótzsche joined in helping them. I sat down and smoked a cigarette, saying, "I'd better stay out of your way. I'm a poor helper in a kitchen, but I will wash the dishes."

We had a jolly supper, cleared the table and washed the dishes and sat down in the living-room. Mrs. Lawrence lit a cigarette and busied herself with some needlework. Gótzsche and I smoked our pipes. Lawrence didn't smoke, but didn't mind others smoking. He put a log of wood in the fireplace and got seated. In a semi-circle, we sat around the fire, one of us on the floor. It was cosy and peaceful, the only light a candle, close to Mrs. Lawrence and her needlework, and a lovely, sputtering fire. Gótzsche and I began to feel more at home and more free and also to ask questions. One of them was, "Why did you come to Taos?"

Lawrence told us he had heard about it in Europe through Leo Stein and others, and that Mabel Sterne had sent him the book "The Land of Poco Tiempo," by Lummis, and had invited him to come. He gave me the book, and told me to keep it, as he didn't care to possess it. On the title-page, Mabel had written:

"Lawrence!—this is the best that has been done yet—
And yet if you knew what lies untouched behind these
externals, unreached by the illuminating vision of a simple
soul yet! Oh, come!"

And here he was, as the guest of Mabel Sterne (now Luhan) in one of her houses. And he didn't hesitate to tell us that he was already tired of it, "tired of her, the bully, with that bullying, evil, destructive, dominating will of hers.—Oh, these awful cultured Americans, how they lack natural aristocracy.—She doesn't let one alone, we have no privacy, and wherever we go, she has to drag that fat Indian along, that Indian chauffeur of hers, Tony Luhan. I hate it. I hate her and the whole atmosphere. Even when we go to the hot springs, she has to drag him along, too, and have him bathe with us. Why don't people know their places? I hate having servants around me, they poison the air. Not that I hate Tony, he is all right in his own way, but I want to choose my own company."

And so he went on, occasionally helped by Mrs. Lawrence.

All we knew about Mabel Sterne was what we had heard in Taos: that she was an eccentric, wealthy, much-married woman, her last husband being Maurice Sterne, the painter. None of this we took into account. It was just small-town gossip, and none of our business. She had a right to live her own life.

We had met her only once, the last time we had been in this house, at the dinner-party. The only point from which we could make a stand was that she had ignored us from the very first. Even at the introduction, she had paid no attention and turned her back on us; and throughout the whole evening, she had not addressed a single word to either of us. We had agreed that she was wrapped up in self-importance, with a dominating and extremely egoistic will; that she showed ill-breeding to a large degree—almost contempt. She had hurt herself in our eyes, but I'm sure she didn't care. Neither did we, but there must be a reason for such behaviour. We had tried to figure it out. As she didn't know us at all, it had to be something other than us. We knew that she and Ufer were not on good terms, and that she was guarding Lawrence against people from the village, and here we were, brought by Ufer. It was further said that she was in love with Lawrence and jealously watched that he should not divide his interest with other people in town. What was what I don't know, but it certainly looked as though she were "stuck on Lawrence," all right. But whether it was this or that, it remained that her conduct towards us had been silly. It made us neither like her nor hate her, we had only an indifferent, indulgent attitude towards her, not even a desire to get even with her.

But now, here we were, listening to the Lawrences, and perhaps she was an evil, destructive person. We had heard nothing to the contrary, and where there is smoke, there is fire. But still, we had no personal opinion. One cannot know a person just from casual contact, and to know a person from gossip is fair to none, so whether she really was a BAD woman or not, I don't know. She didn't matter to us, we were soon to leave and she would be forgotten.

The talk went on and Lawrence said, "She wants to bully me into writing a book on her. Never, never, in my life shall I write that book."

"To think of it!" continued Mrs. Lawrence, with contempt.

The subject was changed by one of us asking about the hot springs. We had heard about them but had not been there yet and would like to go. The Lawrences both raved about it, adding, "If one is not compelled to go together with Mabels and Tonys."

How it came about, I don't remember, but soon we were discussing the possibility of going there together in a day or two. We were all delighted with the plan and decided to go. Götzsche and I were to furnish our Lizzie for transportation. Lawrence wanted to pay for the gasoline, which we emphatically refused. But as it was a whole-day trip, we did allow him to bring luncheon and we also accepted an invitation to eat supper with them after our homecoming.

On the day set, we arrived at Lawrence's house in the morning. They were in high spirits. Our car was a dilapidated old Ford touring car and when Lawrence came out with blankets and cooking utensils, he asked, "Is she reliable?"

"Well," I answered, "she gives us a lot of trouble but she brought us here from New York. And, somehow, when we go on trips, she always brings us back."

"Do you hate her?" Lawrence asked.

"Yes, sometimes we get so disgusted we want to leave the darn old thing on the road and walk. But in the end, we have always cooled down and come her way and gotten her fixed up. In a way, we are quite attached to her, we rather like the old tin can."

"I hate automobiles! Nasty, unreliable machine-monsters!" Lawrence put in emphatically.

"Oh, you and your hates," said Mrs. Lawrence, as she came out of the door, hearing Lawrence. "You have to accept automobiles. It's modern transportation."

"Have you got all the food in the box?" Lawrence asked.

Together, we all made a check-up on everything before we left. I opened the door, bowed low and with a gesture of the hand pointing to the seat, said, "S'il vous plaît, Madame et Monsieur . . ."

"Oh, merci, merci beaucoup!" answered Mrs. Lawrence, and took her place on the back seat. She was very joyful and laughingly she said, "We will just imagine it's a Rolls Royce."

Lawrence smiled, Gótzsche took the wheel and, as we had no self-starter, I cranked the car. It started easily, as the motor was already warm. The body rattled and vibrated and the fenders flapped up and down. We all made some jokes and laughingly started off.

Mabel was on her balcony! I couldn't help thinking as we drove through the plaza, with those two on the back seat—the world-famous writer and the Baroness whom all Taos wanted to meet, and whom Mabel wanted for herself—of how they had failed. And here we were with the celebrities to ourselves! Not because we had wanted to, or done anything to accomplish it, but simply because circumstances had brought it about. We were four people who had met in a strange place. A relationship had developed and we had simply united. All Taos looked and Mabel took notice. How silly it all was!

The morning was bright, the sun nice and warm, and when we got out on the desert towards the Rio Grande, with the flat-capped mesas in the background, the fresh morning air simply filled one with an overabundance of life-joy. It had to find expression in some form and Lawrence started to sing. He was in high spirits and very jolly. He started with an old English drinking song, "When Joan's Ale Was New." Mrs. Lawrence joined him. She had the better voice of the two. Gótzsche and I just listened.

"Why don't you sing, too?" Lawrence broke in.

"We don't know the tune."

"Oh, sing anything, just sing."

"But we would like to learn the tune you are singing," we said.

"Very well," he exclaimed and started all over again, slowly and distinctly.

"There were five jolly good fellows
Went over the hills together,
Went over the hills together
For to join the jovial crew.
They called for their pints of beer, etc. etc. . . . and
bottles of sherry,
To help them over the hills so merry,
To help them over the hills so merry,
When Joan's ale was new, my boys,
When Joan's ale was new."

So runs the first verse, and that is all I ever managed to learn, but Lawrence knew them all and went on to the sixth and last verse; and then he started all over again from the beginning.

We began to hum along as best we could, gradually picking up a word here and there and singing louder. The tune was quite easy and we learned it quickly, but we couldn't quite catch or remember the words or hear them too well, the car was rattling and creaking over the bumpy desert trail and the motor was hammering and making a lot of noise, but we just put in our own words to the tune, singing, "The sky is blue—the desert greenish grey—the sage is smelling nice and sweet—the prairie dog is looking, wondering—the cottontail is curious, and the magpie making a lot of noise—complaining—— And look, oh look, a flock of sheep!"

Like dots of cotton, they had stopped their nibbling to look and listen to machine and man who disturbed the solitude and silence of the desert, making strange sounds. So did the herder look and listen, an old Mexican, thinking perhaps, "The crazy gringos!"

Before we realized it, we had reached the edge of the Rio Grande Canyon. There it was, just like a gigantic crack in the flat table-land. Far down, a blue stream of icy water flowed silently, fathomless, eternal, the River Rio Grande.

We stopped the car and looked down. It was awe-

inspiring. In the side of the canyon wall was a trail leading to the bottom of the canyon. The descent was very steep and the trail rocky and rough. We decided to leave the car and walk down. After a bumpy ride of some fifteen to twenty miles over the desert, we were glad to get out of the car and stretch our limbs. We unloaded the car and divided the load amongst us, each carrying his or her share of blankets, cooking utensils, food and empty gallon bottles to be filled with spring water.

The fact that there were no other cars parked at the top assured us, to a certain extent, that there was nobody else at the spring. But as Lawrence said, "There might still be some cowboys and Indians. You can ride the horses down, you know, and furthermore, there might be a sheepherder with his flock of sheep, taking them down to the river for a drink of water, and himself, perhaps, to take a hot bath. And still further, there might be some Mexicans camping down there. The Mexicans take their sick ones down to the springs and camp there for days at a time. Taking the cure, you know. The water is supposed to be highly charged with radium, and to have great healing powers. Something like Karlsbad, or rather, Karlovy Vary. What it actually does to one, I don't know, but I do know that I feel much better after each bath. You see, one absorbs the radioactivity not only through the skin but also through inhaling the gas-like steam or emanation that comes from the water. Oh, the water is wonderful, just a little warmer than the temperature of one's blood. Only one mustn't stay in too long or you get tired. Five or ten minutes at the most. It soothes the skin and the nerves and peps you up and gives you a real feeling of well-being."

He was talking as we walked down the slope. Some way down, he pointed to some hieroglyphic incisions on a rock, saying, "Do you see those emblematic characters on the rock? They are old signs carved by the Indians, telling where the springs are. They pop up at intervals to show the way."

Lawrence was happy and radiant as a schoolboy, telling the uninitiated, and at the same time he had the sincerity

and knowledge of the scholar. We were all happy and radiant, bound together also by Lawrence's vivid interest.

He told us that the Indians, long before the Spaniards came, had known the springs and held them sacred, as they believed them to have the power of eternal life. But when the Whites came into the country and heard about the magic, the Indians had covered the springs with sand, as they did not want the white men to bathe in their sacred springs and receive the power to live forever. The springs, however, were later found by the Whites and a man called "Old Manby" had laid a claim to them many years ago. He had built a rock-walled house over them and, I think, tried to exploit them. But now it was being used freely by anyone who cared to go there, the only tribute given the old man being the naming of the place after him, "Manby Springs."

When we reached the bottom of the canyon, we first approached a horse shed. No horses, and the door to the bath-house stood wide open, but just the same, we had to peep in before we would finally rejoice in being alone. We were alone! Lawrence played the role of Boss and started to give orders. But he was a nice and considerate Boss. We didn't mind it in the least, it rather amused us. And he gave his orders in an apologetic way, or as if he were asking for a favour.

First he asked Gótzsche and me to gather driftwood, or if there were none around, then to break off the driest twigs of the sagebrush, of which there was plenty around; then to build a fireplace of rocks and take some water from the river and put it on the fire to boil.

"Frieda and I will bathe first, if you don't mind, and then while you get in, we will fry the eggs and bacon and make the tea."

We had suggested bringing our gasoline stove from our camping outfit, but Lawrence would hear none of it, as he hated all mechanical contrivances. And so we gathered dry sagebrush, since there was no wood around, and built a smoky fire and put the water on to boil.

We sat down on the ground to wait, and to take a look



Lawrence and Gótzsche outside hot springs, Rio Grande Canyon, Taos, New Mexico, 1922

at the surroundings. The first impression was one of majestic grandeur. And being at the bottom, one looked up first. The walls of the canyon rose on both sides almost straight from the river, leaving only a ribbon of blue sky overhead. It was like being in a large, extensive cathedral. One saw only a few birds silently floating in the air up and down the canyon; perhaps an eagle soaring far above the table-land. The river, not very wide, moved with a rapid current, with a dull sound of underworld, and only on the fringe, where the water met rocks and pebbles, there was a pleasant, purling sound.

Some fifteen to twenty feet away from the stone house was a small pool in the sand of the river bank, only a few feet from the river itself. In the cool autumn air, the pool steamed slightly. It was the small, outside hot spring.

Waiting, meditating in the sun, one felt a great peace, shut off from the noisy world—a delight in being alone with nature.

We were awakened in our day-dreaming by Mrs. Lawrence. She was standing in the doorway with both hands in her wet, dishevelled hair, making motions to dry it. With a sigh of well-being, she said, "Oh, how good it feels after the bath. Is the water boiling yet? You can go in now, Lorenzo is dressing."

We went into the house. It was rather dark. Lawrence looked like a statue in his white, tight underwear, like a figure in a tableau. In a delighted voice, he told us how the bath was "really wonderful.—Did you find wood?"—"Well, sage will do!—Is it a good fire?"

We looked around curiously. On one side of the room was a low wooden bench, and at the opposite side of the entrance was the pool, set off like a little room by itself. We looked down into the water. It was quite a bit below floor level, and the basin was of rough rock. So were the stairs leading to it. High in the stone wall was a tiny window. The whole gave one a medieval impression. We hastened to undress and descended into the water. It was lovely. As Lawrence left, he requested us not to stay in too long. "You mustn't get tired."

When we came out after the bath, Lawrence was dividing the lunch on four tin plates. He had fried some bread with the bacon. Mrs. Lawrence poured the tea. We all had a good appetite, and seated in the sand, with the plates in our laps, we had a delicious lunch. And while Mrs. Lawrence and the Danes smoked their after-lunch cigarettes, Lawrence filled the gallon bottles with water from the small outside spring, to take home for drinking water. Then we also washed the dishes afterwards, and when the dish-water had flowed into the river, we washed our discarded underwear and socks, as we had changed after the bath. Then we put these on rocks to dry in the sun. Then we lingered on for a little while, amusing ourselves in different ways: having throwing contests or making ducks and drakes on the surface of the river, and so on. We had a jolly good time.

It was late afternoon when we again reached the Lawrences' house. We stayed for supper and spent the evening there, too. Our acquaintance was beginning to develop into an approach towards friendship.

Now we came frequently to see the Lawrences. One day, when we came over, he was upset, very much so. Mabel was the cause. He broke out:

"That stubborn woman! I have told her that she is living entirely from her head and that evil will of hers, and that she will slowly destroy herself unless she lets go and lets life rule; and to do things with her hands. And what does she do? She goes and knits a scarf with her head, and pronto, *will*s it onto me."

He picked up an enormous scarf from the table—almost two feet wide and fully six feet long. The colours were divided in cross bands. We counted them. There were forty-five colour bands, and the colours were mauve, lilac, chrome yellow, violet, two blues, purple, vermilion, orchid, five greens, brown, pink and mustard yellow.

"Look at it," he said, "what a conglomeration of colours! Very bad taste, with no sense of proportion. What an atrocity! Now if she had just knitted a scarf in a few, simple colours, with some feeling in it, it could have been

nice. But what does she do? She makes it with her head, and I say nothing good comes out of the head. There it is: the colours, even the proportions, are supposed to have a meaning. It is me and her and Taos! Think of it! Rot! How ridiculous!

"I don't want it, nor like it, nor want to accept it, but she forced it on me with that evil will of hers—and Frieda doesn't want it, either."

"Neither do I," said Gótzsche.

"Then you take it, Merrild," said Lawrence, and put it in my hands.

I examined it and declared it to be very uneven and loosely knitted, but good material, pure wool, and said to Lawrence, "You can dye it. It will be good for you to have, now the weather is getting colder."

"*I don't want it!* You keep it," he exclaimed, almost in rage.

I didn't want it either and said, "What good will it be to me? I won't have any use for it in California, and I can't wear it here. Mabel most certainly will recognize it if she sees me wearing it."

"What do I care? I want her to recognize it, the . . . , that will teach her—bullying one into accepting things!"

Suddenly he changed, as if realizing that he was trying to bully me and he said, "If you can't bear the look of it, and really don't want it, don't take it."

I changed, too. The idea of having Mabel see me wearing her masterpiece suddenly became attractive to me, and I wouldn't mind doing Lawrence a favour.

"I will take it, and I will wear it, too," I said with emphasis.

And so I did. Everybody I met asked me where I had gotten that loud scarf and I simply told them the story. It is surprising that everybody delighted in the story and it travelled so fast that later on, when I met people, they just asked, "Is that Mabel's scarf?"

"Yes, that is Mabel's scarf."

And then one day Gótzsche and I met Mabel in the plaza. She probably knew already, and did she look?

Yes, she looked twice. She was painfully beginning to take notice of the Danes.

The scarf was intended to have a meaning and it has, even if it has shrunk to a skeleton of its former self. The harsh, false colours have been tempered by time and have faded into a weak but more agreeable harmony. But thanks to the good material, it has withstood weather, washing and wear, and is now hanging before me, telling its tale about Lawrence, Mabel and Taos.

In any small place there is always a certain amount of gossip, and in Taos there was plenty. There was only one picture show a week, shown in the dance hall, and only once a month the cowboys would shoot up the town. And once the stage coach was held up. An attempted murder also happened while we were there. Shots fired from the outside, through a hotel window, aiming at the victim seated at the dinner-table. The shot splintered some glass and made a hole in the opposite wall, but missed its mark. There was some counter-shooting and the suspect was captured in the plaza. These were about the major happenings while we were there and could only occupy the town talk for a little while. I only faintly remember some of the gossip, but will not try to recall it. I mention it because it was there, and everybody took part or, to some extent, was interested.

Even Lawrence, who was shut up in Mabel's prison, would, when we called on him, ask as his first question: "What's the gossip?"

Sometimes he was rebuked by Mrs. Lawrence, saying, "What do you care for all that silly talk?"

"Yes I do, it's a writer's business to *know*. And there is always a certain amount of psychology in gossip."

Of course he was always denouncing gossip, he hated it, but at the same time he wanted to know. And as he had very little social intercourse with the population and very seldom went down to the village, he had no way of knowing, and so we became the news bearers.

And I think we were well qualified, too. We wouldn't have paid the attention we did if it hadn't been for Lawrence,

but as it was, we kept our ears open. In late afternoon, people would gather around the post office waiting for the stage coach to bring in the mail, and the latest would be discussed or told, and we would be there. We had also begun to take our supper at the hotel, where we got more information. We talked with Mexicans and Indians, with merchants and professionals, and last but not least, with the artists. I think we were well posted and heard the same stories from many angles, and so were well qualified to bring them to Lawrence. I have only a very vague recollection of it all and will not try to recall any of it. Except one story:

Lawrence went, one day, to the studio of one of the most prominent painters. The painter wanted Lawrence's opinion on his work, but Lawrence merely said that it bored him to look at pictures.

The painter then said, "I hear you go round the town saying you don't like my paintings."

"Yes, I do. I really can't *bear* to look at them," Lawrence retorted hotly.

This story amused the town, especially the artists. They hugged themselves with delight, but there was nothing to be so tickled about, because he would have said the very same about the rest of them, and for that matter, about Gótzsche and me as well.

This story was related to Frieda one afternoon when we had tea with her and Lawrence.

"What then? Did you quarrel?" Frieda asked Lawrence.

"Oh, yes, violently. But of course, not vulgarly. We parted in mutual esteem, bowing each other out."

"You are awful. You only went on purpose to upset him. I knew that all along. Why must you be so spiteful?" said Frieda. "You're never happy unless you're upsetting somebody's applecart."

"Am I doomed to agree with everybody, then?" asked Lawrence.

"No. But you needn't *set out* to be disagreeable. Not to him, who likes you and thinks so much of you. You ought to be flattered that he *cares* what you think. But no,

you have to go and try to undermine and discourage him. Oh—why was I ever pestered with such a viperish husband as you?" said Frieda.

"Remember, I've been in a temper for days," Lawrence replied calmly and gravely. "Therefore there could be no putting."

"Oh, it only makes it worse. I am tired of your temper, really."

"Well, I am not going to feel guilty about it, whatever you may say."

"Oh yes, you do feel guilty," said Frieda. She rose roughly and went to the other end of the room.

* * *

Mabel, frequently self-styled "Queen of the Indians," wanted Lawrence to write about the Indians and herself, and for him to know them through her. So she arranged to have a great Indian fiesta at her studio.

When Gótzsche and I called on Lawrence one afternoon, we learned that we were to come to the affair. We felt that the invitation was rather *pro forma* and didn't care to go, but both Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence pleaded with us till we accepted.

We knew we were only invited on account of Lawrence, and I further said to him, "The Indians haven't developed the habit of showing their emotions, and as their dances are both emotional and religious, we cannot just call on them to perform in a room full of Whites, and expect the real thing. It will just be a stunt."

"Quite," said Lawrence, "but that's how people are. They want to put on things, to show up and applaud their own cleverness. How interesting! I am afraid it will be a false affair. I really hate to go, but it is being *put on* for my sake, so I suppose we will simply have to go."

We had supper at the Lawrences' and arrived at the studio together with them. Present were the hostess, her friend Nina Witt, and two others of her guests, a Turkish writer and his English-born wife. The Indians were not in yet. They were dressing for the dance in Tony's room.

In the big fireplace, logs of wood were burning with a crackling, spluttering flame, filling the room with incense from the burning cedar and ash root.

The stillness of the night outside was broken by the Indian Whoop-pee, the tinkling of bells and a palaver of free, happy and excited voices. The door opened. Majestically, Tony led his band of Indians into the big room. I noticed how each one changed as he entered from the outside. Their relaxed bodies stiffened and the happy expressions on their faces froze into mere masks. Some of them nodded their heads at us and tried a smile that died in a grimace. How different they must have looked in the dressing-room, all by themselves, wholly themselves, happy as children, elevated, not yet realizing it was not a dance but a performance. Their happy cry when they entered into the still, star-lit night!

There were quite a number of them, entering one by one—men and women, young and old. Some came in as though they were walking in space, not in this world at all, like stoic statues. Some came in with a put-on attitude borrowed from the Whites, the Americans—nonchalantly waving a hand at us and saying, "Hello, folks." An empty gesture, the assurance in the voice was lacking. And then others were so timid they did not know what to do with themselves. They stared deeply at the floor as though hypnotized, or hastily hid themselves behind the backs of others, more practised in stage-tricks.

The light from the room was floating out through the open door into the night, losing itself in the dark. Just outside, others were coming—half-naked, feathers in their hair, paint on their faces, loin-cloths, bells at their ankles, beaded moccasins. Some lifted their arms over their heads, jumped into the air and cried their wild Whoop-pee in an orgasm, as their naked bodies came in contact with the crisp air of the night. The high-light fell on their brown bodies, silhouetted against the soft darkness of the night. Their muscles played under their velvety skins, the whole of their bodies seemed to breathe, they were so vividly alive. How beautiful, how savage and pagan they looked—

a strange race, with a strange culture, and with an air of indomitable nobility. And yet, as soon as they were under the White Man's roof, and in his company, they changed. They became extremely self-conscious and tried to hide themselves under various masks—impenetrable.

The Indian knows he is doomed; he hides and sinks down deeper and deeper inside himself, until some day, he will be gone. And as one can never fully know oneself, how is one to know others?—And to nurse the vain hope of attempting to know another race, is even more impossible. One can do but little more than to record visual happenings.

Lawrence said, so often: "They are going dead inside themselves. They are slowly being destroyed, a dying race. To try to 'save' them will only destroy them so much quicker. Best leave them to their own dark destiny. Not even a Mabel can save them, with all the politics in the world, nor with that strong 'Saviour' will of hers.—I tell you, she will only destroy them.—The only way to help, is to leave them alone."

When all the Indians were assembled, a score or so, they were divided into two groups: the singers and drummers, mostly composed of elders, and the rest, the younger ones, the dancers.

The little group of Whites were sitting or standing together in a corner of the room, making commonplace remarks. Even Lawrence didn't have anything real to say at this moment. Mabel was strutting around, giving orders to Tony and the rest, feeling queenish.

A signal was given, and the drums began to beat. The voices of the singers chimed in and the dancers commenced to step, shaking their bells and rattles. Hy-a! Hy-a! Thud, Thud, Thud! Rattle-rattling, pat-pat, hy-a, hie, tinkle, ugh! Many voices keeping time. Monotonous, in a steady rhythm, on and on it went, beating perfect time. Faster and faster, ending in an abrupt culmination.

We applauded and made flat compliments, and had another dance, and another. As Indian dances are best seen, not described this way, I will merely say that it was

beautiful and spectacular—as it always is, even at Grand Canyon, where they are performed so many times daily for tourists. Only we didn't throw coins to them after each performance.

But, somehow, we were not moved. The atmosphere was artificial; something held us back. We had all seen dances before, at fiestas in the pueblo, dances that made as spectacular and vivid an impression as any opera ballet seen on any stage here or in Europe. But, of course, an Indian dance is something distinct in itself, fascinating beyond description.

There we were, looking at one another, looking at the Indians, everybody feeling out of place. Then Mabel said: "Let's have some fun. Let's all dance—dance like the Indians."

Few responded, but little by little, we were all dragged into it. I can still see us, making a silly attempt to copy the difficult rhythmic steps of the Indians. If it had been spontaneous, driven by an irresistible urge from within, it would have been fine and natural. It would have been met with response from, and we would have been in a kind of contact with, the Indians. As it was, we were bullied into it, just being good sports. The attempt was insincere. We were utterly "out of touch." But we yelled and we stepped and we laughed, and the Indians laughed—oh, such an indulgent laugh—at the British lady, the Turkish writer, the German baroness, the English poet, the Danish painters, and the American society women. "Ain't we got fun!" How ridiculous it was!

I looked at Lawrence. He was prancing and stepping, yelling and waving around, out of time and out of step, like the rest of us, not catching on to the rhythm at all. Half-willingly, he tried to be a good sport, tried to let himself go, at the same time hating himself for going against his real feelings, saying with the Bible, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world."

We soon tired of playing Indian; yelling and stepping, prancing around were too strenuous when not backed by holy

fire from within. Pantingly, we stopped, one by one, and went to our corner of the room, wiping our faces which were wet with perspiration. Another dance was started, but none of us participated, despite several efforts to have us do so.

Then our hostess started the victrola, playing modern dance records. Well, it looked as though we had to dance. So why not? A modern fox-trot was, after all, something we were more familiar with, only at first it struck me as rather blasphemous after the Indian dance. Perhaps the others felt the same way. The record was almost run down before the first couple took the floor. The victrola started another enticing tune, and little by little, we were all dancing—all but Lawrence. Mabel had tried to make him, but he had refused. Gótzsche and I danced with the young Indian girls. They were good dancers, and good looking, but their sweat didn't smell so good. We also danced with Mrs. Lawrence, who was a good dancer, too, and with the other white women; only not Mabel, she was so busy at the beginning of each new dance trying to make Lawrence dance with her. But to no avail. He did not like modern dances, all this grabbing and twisting and twirling and indecent tail-wagging. It was repugnant to him. Why, oh why, did people do such things to enjoy themselves? A natural diffidence and a dislike of being touched made dancing unpleasant to him. But Mabel, with her will, could not let him alone. I saw her take his hand and say:

"Oh, come, Lorenzo—try it. Just once. You'll enjoy it."

But he snappily refused her, saying, "Enjoy!—that ghastly word! Why must people insist on enjoying themselves in these awful ways. Why 'enjoy' oneself at all?"

He didn't care for that kind of enjoyment. Too humiliating.

Gótzsche and I were watching and I remarked: "She must be awfully dumb if she doesn't know that she is annoying Lawrence; or else she is so blindly in love that she can't see it. And to do it just for the sake of bullying would be too stupid. It isn't because she just wants to

dance. I'll bet that if you try to dance with her, she will turn you down."

"Not me," said Gótzsche, "I won't risk it. And besides, I should hate to dance with that fat, conceited snob. You try it yourself," he said.

"Well," I remarked, "just for the satisfaction of proving to you that I am right, I will do it. I feel this way about it. If she refuses, she will be turning herself down."

I buttoned my coat, straightened my tie, patted my hair, and pulling myself erect, I winked an eye at Gótzsche and said, "Here goes!"

When I got to Mabel, I bowed and asked very politely for the pleasure of a dance with her.—No, she was tired!

Triumphantly, I turned and went back to Gótzsche. Before I had reached him, she grabbed the Turk and began to dance with him.

"I'll be damned," said Gótzsche. "Apparently, there are two things she wants very badly. To crush the Danes, and to dance with Lawrence. She will accomplish neither."

We danced again. Everybody was on the floor except Lawrence. He looked angry. Perhaps he wanted to dance. He hated to be left out, but he would never submit to learning. He would never go hugging women around their waists and wagging tails with them. He could not bear the least physical intimacy. Something inside him recoiled. The mere thought of it offended a certain aloof pride and subtle arrogance in him. I knew pretty well how he felt, not so much from my own observation as from what he had so often said.

Then he sprang a surprise on us. He started to dance. Alone, he pranced among the swaying couples on the floor. Demonstrative he was, dancing by himself. Wildly he jumped around, step after step, his own Indian dance, silently saying, "The Indian dance is far, far better than White Man's degenerate tail-wagging."

Or had he perhaps noticed Mabel refusing me and was he perhaps dancing to spite her? Nothing ever escaped his observation.

By this time Lawrence had begun to see some of the

people in the colony. He would go to the artists' studios, and they in turn felt free to call on him. Frieda did not like this, and one day, when we came to call on them a caller had just left. He had been more or less boring, and they had started an argument about it.

"And have you promised to see them again?" Frieda asked Lawrence.

"Whom?"

"Why, any of them."

"No."

"Oh, they're becoming rather an institution."

"You like them too?"

"Yes, they're all right. But I don't want to spend my life with them. After all, that sort of person isn't exactly my sort—and I thought you used to pretend it wasn't yours."

"It isn't. But then, no sort of people are my sort."

"Yes, they are. Any sort of people, so long as they make a fuss over you."

"Surely they make an even greater fuss over you."

"Do they? It's you they want, not me. And you go, as usual, like a lamb to the slaughter."

"Baa!" he said.

"Yes, baa! You should hear yourself bleat."

"I'll listen," he said.

"I do like to see a few people, but now there's all this intimacy and neighbouring. I just can't stand it. I just can't."

"But you began it."

"No, I didn't; you began it. And your beastly sweetness and gentleness with such people. I wish you kept a bit of it for me." And she continued, "It isn't even the people—if you would only keep your proper distance, and not make yourself cheap to them and get into messes."

He was silent. And to tell the truth, he was also feeling a revulsion against all this neighbouring, as Frieda called it, and all this talk. As he admitted himself. It was usually the same. He started by holding himself aloof, then gradually he let himself get mixed in, and then he had revulsions. And he loathed it. As he said:

"It swamps one with a sort of common emotion like treacle, and before one knows where one is, one is caught like a fly on a flypaper, in one mess with all the other buzzers. How I hate it!"

Frieda looked at him wistfully as he sat with his brow clouded. She had a real, instinctive mistrust of other people—all other people. In her heart of hearts, she said she wanted to live alone with him, and know nobody, all the rest of her life.

There was a pause, and each was left to his own thoughts. Then Lawrence said quietly, "I feel there is something I must fight out with mankind still. I haven't finished with my fellow-men. I've got a struggle with them yet."

"But what struggle?" Frieda asked. "What's the good? What's the point of your struggle? And what's your struggle for?"

"I don't know. But it's inside me, and I haven't finished yet. To make some kind of an opening—some kind of a way for the afterwards."

"Ha, the afterwards will make its own way, it won't wait for you. It's a kind of nervous obstinacy and self-importance in you. You don't like people. You always turn away from them and hate them. Yet like a dog to his vomit, you always turn back. And it will be the same old game here again, as everywhere else. What are these people, after all? Quite nice, but just common and—and not in your line at all. But there you are. You stick your head into a bush like an ostrich, and think you're doing wonders."

"I intend to move with men and get men to move with me before I die," he said. Then he added hastily: "Or at any rate, I'll try a bit longer still. When I make up my mind that it's really no good, I'll go with you and we'll live alone somewhere together, and forget the world. I'll retire away from the world, and forget it. But not yet. Not till I feel I've finished. I've got to struggle with men and the world of men for a time yet."

"Ah, you and your men! Men! What do these people mean to you, after all? Are they men? They are only something you delude yourself about. And then you'll come

a cropper, and fall back on me. Just as it always is. You fall back on me, and I'm expected to like it. I'm good enough to fall back on, when you've made a fool of yourself with a lot of tuppenny little people, imagining you're doing something in the world of *men*. Much men there is about it! Common little street-people, that's all."

He heard all she had to say and he admitted that as far as the past went, it was all true. He had started off on his fiery courses: always, as she said, to fall back rather the worse for the attempt, on her. She had no use at all for fiery courses and efforts with the worlds of men. Let all that rubbish go.

"Well," he said, "it's still my need to make these attempts. Wait till I've exhausted the need, and we'll have a little place of our own and forget the world, really. I know I can do it. I could almost do it now. But wait a bit longer."

"Oh, I suppose I shall have to," she said recklessly. "You'll have to go on making a fool of yourself till you're tired. Wives are *supposed* to have to take their husbands back a little damaged and repentant after their *love affairs* with other women. And I'm hanged if it wouldn't be more fun than this business of seeing you come back once again fooled in your attempts with men—the world of men, as you call it. If they were real men, I wouldn't mind. But look at these people. Really! And you're supposed to have had some experience in life! 'Clip in, old man!'" She imitated someone's voice and manner. "And you stand it all and think it's wonderful! Nay, men are too foolish for me to understand them; I give them up."

He laughed, realizing that most of what she said was true.

"You see," he said, "I have the roots of my life with you. But I want, if possible, to send out a new shoot in the life of mankind—the effort man makes for ever, to grow into new forms."

She looked at him. And somehow, she wanted to cry, because he was so silly in refusing to be finally disappointed

in his efforts with mankind; and yet his silliness was pathetic, in a way, beautiful. But then it *was* so silly—she wanted to shake him.

"Send out a new shoot, then. Send it out. You do it in your writing, already!" she cried. "But getting yourself mixed up with these impudent little people won't send any shoots, don't you think it. They'll nip you in the bud again, as they always do. And besides," she continued, "I don't see you agreeing with other people and playing the fiddle in their orchestra for long."

"Do you see me as a fiddler at all?"

"I've seen you fiddling away hard enough many times," retorted Frieda. "Why, what else do you do, all your life, but fiddle some tune or other?"

He did not reply, and there was a pause. His face was pale and very definite, as if he were some curious sea-shell. He pondered stubbornly, and knew it was true. But he had set his will on something, and wasn't going to give way.

"I want to do something with living people, somewhere, somehow, while I live on the earth. I write, but I write alone. And I live alone. Without any connection whatever with the rest of men."

"Don't swank, you don't live alone. You've got *me* there safe enough, to support you. Don't swank to me about being alone, because it insults me, you see. I know how much alone you are, with me always there keeping you together."

And again he sulked and swallowed it and obstinately held out. "None the less," he retorted, "I do want to do something along with men. I *am* alone and cut off. As a man among men, I just have no place. I have my life with you, I know: *et preterea nihil*."

"*Et preterea nihil!* And what more do you want? Besides, you liar, haven't you your writing? Isn't that all you want, isn't that *doing* all there is to be done? Men! Much men there is about them! But when it comes to that, I even have to be the only man as well as the only woman."

"That's the whole trouble," said he bitingly.

"Bah, you creature, you ought to be grateful," cried Frieda.

Lawrence sat pale and silent and thinking of it all. When he spoke again, he had changed the subject, knowing the uselessness of argument.

So they spoke, and about like this he has written, one of their many arguments. But gossip called it violent quarrels.

The days went by. Lawrence grew more and more restless and irritated. He was annoyed by Mabel and the whole situation. So was Mrs. Lawrence. It was obvious that the whole atmosphere was poisoned. Besides, the artists and the people from the village were now calling too frequently to suit Lawrence. He did not like it at all. He wanted to get away, far away from it all, for a while. He was thoroughly tired of Mabel and her company and of the art colony as well: of the dreadful, "sub-arty" people as he called them.

Mabel, though, was the main source of his discontent. What actually took place between them I seldom witnessed. If it happened, once in a great while, that she was at Lawrence's when we called, she would immediately leave. All in all, we had only been in her company twice. But if we hadn't seen much of her, we had heard so much more. We seldom came to Lawrence's without something being said about her. Mrs. Lawrence could be upset and angry, but she never displayed the fury of hatred that Lawrence exploded into. I do not recollect all that was said and done about this and that. It was, I venture to say, just complications developed from the "eternal triangle."

The situation grew more and more extreme, and the atmosphere so intense that they could bear it no more. As Lawrence said: "There is a queer menace in the air, the whole surrounding breathes destruction, and I for one value my own bit of life too much to stand it any longer. We must get away for a change, if only for a while."

So one day, he finally put his foot down and told Mabel

how he felt and about his intentions. That, of course, did not fit her programme. She didn't want him to go away. But when she saw that he was determined, she offered him an old, abandoned ranch she owned, some seventeen miles away, up in the mountains. Rather that, than lose him. And after a rest up there, much could be forgotten and perhaps they would come back and stay with her again.

Lawrence told us this one day when he called and asked us what we thought about it: whether he should accept it or refuse it and go away altogether, out of Mabel's reach and influence. I knew our advice would affect him to some extent, all he needed was just a push. Now, in a way, it was tempting to have him get out of Mabel's reach; that certainly would be a blow to her. She hadn't been nice to us at all, but we nursed no grievance. As she really didn't know us, it was obvious it could not be our persons or characters she was against; we were only obstacles in her plan and so she wanted to shove us out of the way. We didn't allow ourselves to hate her, although most certainly we didn't like her behaviour. But what did it all matter? Furthermore, we were to leave Taos very soon. Ergo, we advised Lawrence to accept Mabel's offer. Perhaps the storm would blow over and the sun smile again.

"I should rather like to get up into the mountains," Lawrence said. "And Mabel really showed some understanding. Perhaps she isn't so bad after all."

"It *would* be wonderful up there," intoned Mrs. Lawrence.

"All right, let's try," Lawrence exclaimed with vigour. And as it was so decided, he invited us to come along as their guests for a few days.

And so we started for the ranch together. And as they were just to have a try at it before finally deciding to move up there for any length of time, we only brought a few blankets, some cooking utensils and food enough to last for a few days. We set off early in the morning in our faithful but dilapidated flivver. It was in the latter part of November, and the air was brisk, but we felt very gay and happy and sang as we rolled in the open car over the

desert. We sang Frieda's favourite on our way up to the high land.

LEEZIE LINDSAY

1

“Will ye gang to the Hielands, Leezie Lindsay?
Will ye gang to the Hielands wi' me?
Will ye gang to the Hielands, Leezie Lindsay,
My bride and my darling to be?”

2

‘To gang to the Hielands wi’ you, sir,
I dinna ken how that may be,
For I ken na the land that ye live in,
Nor ken I the lad I’m gaun wi’.’

3

‘Leezie, lassie, ’tis little that ye ken,
If sae be that ye dinna ken me,
For my name is Lord Ronald MacDonald,
A chieftain o’ high degree.’

4

She has kilted her coats o’ green satin,
She has kilted them up to her knee,
And she’s off wi’ Lord Ronald MacDonald,
His bride and his darling to be.”

When we reached the foothills and started to ascend into the mountains, we discovered that snow had already fallen. The sun had come out, nice and warm. But the snow was thawing underneath and made the adobe ground soft, so that the trail was wet and very slippery. We commenced to have difficulties. The car was skidding, and on the upgrade the wheels would spin and spin. The motor became overheated, and when strained, stopped. The car had a great habit of boiling on the grades in mountainous regions, but we always carried a desert-bag with water so we could give her a drink when it was needed. This happened a couple of times, so we just paused to let the motor cool off.

Lawrence was sitting in the back seat, taking it fairly well, but not altogether patiently, just a tiny bit sarcastic. And now, as hundreds of times before, he uttered his hatred



In the Foothills, Desert beyond, 1922

for machines and autocars in general and our poor Lizzie in particular. Mrs. Lawrence showed no concern at all.

The car stopped again, this time on a level stretch. Nobody said anything. Gótzsche and I just got out of the car and opened up the hood to look things over and started to clean the spark plugs. It was too much for Lawrence. He got out, too, and busied himself by looking over our shoulders, trying to find a solution. He couldn't bear not to be master of the situation. Suddenly, he said, deeply earnest: "I think she needs more water. Shall I give her some?"

Gótzsche and I looked slyly at one another and one of us answered, "No, thank you, she's full up."

I don't know if Mrs. Lawrence saw our sly look or not, but she called out, loudly, "Oh, Lorenzo, don't make a fool of yourself. You know perfectly well you don't know anything about motor cars."

Now, Gótzsche and I didn't know much about cars ourselves, but we had to fuss around and make believe that we were masters and bosses over our own car, so as not to lose our prestige as motorists and keep their confidence intact. After looking at the ignition and cleaning the spark plugs, we never neglected to blow at the coils. I shall never forget the reason for this coil-blowing. One time, on our trip across the continent, we got stuck in a sand-storm. The car wouldn't start again. We examined every piece of the motor that was visible, all lines, pipes, coil and battery, and could see nothing wrong. We decided there must be something wrong inside the motor, perhaps too much carbon. So then we unscrewed the motor-block and cleaned the valves and piston heads, but still the car wouldn't start.

There was nothing left for us to do but just to sit in the sand and look at her and wait and watch, waiting and watching for hours for another car to come by, but no other cars came our way. I got impatient and said to Gótzsche, "Let us take off the oilpan underneath the motor-block and have a look at the bearings. It can't do any harm, and time will pass more quickly."

So I crawled under the car and emptied the oil into a dish-pail and unscrewed the pan, tightened up the bearings and got things back in place, but still the darn car wouldn't start. We had to give up and resign ourselves to waiting. At last, late in the afternoon, a car came by and stopped. Its lone occupant was a jolly fellow who asked the customary, "What's your trouble?" Well, we didn't know. "Have you looked at the coils?" he said. "Yes, everything," we replied, "everything." "Were you in the sand-storm at noon?" he asked. "Yes." "Let me have a look at the coils."

He took them out one by one and said, "Even though you can't see anything, there is a lot of fine sand there, preventing you from getting contact." So he just blew at the coils and put them back in again and said, "Now, try 'er—once more—she is coming."

He was right. The car started.

Now back to our mountain road with the Lawrences. After cleaning plugs and blowing coils, we cranked and cranked, taking turns. Lawrence, like a good sport, wanted to do his turn, but we never let him. It was too dangerous, the crank would kick back. Finally, we got tired of cranking without result, and had to ask Mrs. Lawrence to unwrap herself from the blankets and come out and help us push. Poor Mrs. Lawrence! If she won't remember the Danes for anything else, she will remember them for their Lizzie. As she often said, "It is the most trying old Lizzie that ever went along the road. She coughs and trembles at the tiniest hill, gets stuck and has to be shoved. Poor Lizzie, she is a trial."

Together we all turned the car about and pushed it downhill till we got to a steeper grade. We then got in again and let the car run downhill by itself and threw it into gear. She trembled, harked and barked, and best of all, she started. Again, we turned about and proceeded uphill, got past our last stage and quite a bit beyond. But then she refused to take the next hill. Lawrence and I had to get out and push, and we made it. But at the last grade before we reached the ranch, the wheels would

only spin and spin in the slippery mud. We had to give it up despite our combined efforts of pushing. We decided to abandon the car in the road and come back late in the afternoon when it would freeze and make the road hard. We took along as much as we could carry and walked the last mile or so up to the ranch.

After the strenuous motor trip, it felt good to be at the ranch. The ranch houses, two shabby shacks, and some sheds, were at the end of a clearing in the forest. The alfalfa field, now just an easy, flat slope, covered with snow. We were amazed at the beauty of the place. The dark green trees against a white blanket of snow. There was pine, pinon, spruce and cedar, and above towered the majestic Lobo Peak. Below, we had a gigantic panorama over the vast desert, with other mountains in the distance. Flat-capped mesas or table-lands shot up from the desert like fairy tales. The sky was endless and the air so fine, clear and fresh, virgin air.

We collected ourselves and went up to the houses to have a peep inside. They were desolate, dismal and dirty, in a state of decay. They had been abandoned by man for a long time and were inhabited only by rats, squirrels, chipmunks and bats. Despite the missing glass in the windows, the air was foul with the odours of excrement and dead animals, left to rot. The larger house, two rooms and a kitchen, was absolutely uninhabitable as it was, and needed repair in the worst way. We therefore started to clean the smaller house, to get it in shape for the night. It had one room only, stacked with clumsy old furniture and a very small kitchen with a stove.

At first, the houses seemed hopeless and impossible even to try to live in. But after we had cleaned the kitchen, gotten a fire going in the stove and had our lunch, we began to see possibilities. The place attracted us and Nature was simply fascinating. Lawrence named the place Lobo Ranch, after the mountain it was on, "Lobo" being the Spanish for "Wolf."

During that first evening at the little ranch, came the biggest moment in our Taos life. As though it were

yesterday, I can see the four of us seated close together around the little stove in that tiny little kitchen lit only by a candle. We had just had our supper and were enjoying a smoke and a sense of well-being when Lawrence sprang the surprise on us. He said:

"Frieda and I have decided to stay up here for the winter and want you to be with us as our guests."

Perplexed, one of us asked, "Do you mean we should stay with you up here all winter?"

"Yes, of course, and why not?" Lawrence said with emphasis.

"No, it is too much. We can't accept it. Thank you very much for your generous offer and the trust you thereby show in us. We will be more than glad to stay a week or ten days, and help get the houses in shape for you, but then we will have to be leaving Taos for California."

Our refusal was obviously very disappointing to both Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence, and he said, "Wouldn't you care to stay with us up here, or don't you like it?"

"We like it very much up here and would be more than delighted to stay."

"Then why do you want to travel? The world has little to offer. Seeing things doesn't amount to much. And still, if we must go, we can all go somewhere in the Spring."

I looked at Gótzsche for an answer, but he seemed to be pleasantly bewildered for the moment and absolutely passive, so I took it upon myself to reply.

"We have already overstayed our time here. It is now too late in the season to take the northern route, because of the snow, so we shall be forced to go south, which is a longer distance than we had figured on and will cost us more. We have barely enough money to take us to California. And as we cannot sell our pictures in Taos, nor in Santa Fé, we must go to a larger city where there is more possibility of selling our work; and if that fails, where there is a possibility of getting jobs as house painters or anything else."

Lawrence didn't accept this reason and said, "It won't

cost you anything at all to stay with us, you will be our guests. And when Spring comes, you will still have your money intact and can then take the northern route as you first planned."

Gótzsche showed no resistance, so I answered again.

"Very well, if we stay up here, we will have to buy heavier underwear and sweaters. We can't get along with the shoes we have but will have to get boots or galoshes or both. We are not prepared for winter weather. Then there will be tobacco, gas for the car and many other things. I'm sorry, but though we would like to stay very much, we are forced to go."

Lawrence saw the point of my objections right away, but they were no obstacle either, money meant so little to him. He said, "I haven't much money myself, about a hundred and fifty dollars, but I think that will carry us through the winter. We will all share it together and buy what we need."

I was getting no help from Gótzsche at all. I felt he liked the idea very much but was leaving it up to me. Again I thanked Lawrence for his generosity, and Mrs. Lawrence, too, but this last offer we could accept even less.

Then he said, "It would be nice if you could stay for the winter. You could then make the designs for my books which we have talked about, and we could work at it together. I suppose some royalties from my books will be coming in, or I can get an advance from the publishers."

"Wouldn't it be wonderful if you could stay and work together?" Mrs. Lawrence put in. "And we must commission Gótzsche to paint a portrait of Lawrence. Oh, it would be *so* nice if you could stay. If you can't, I am afraid we shall have to give it up, too. I wouldn't think of staying alone up here with Lorenzo through the winter. He isn't any too strong. He could, of course, have an Indian or a Mexican for help, but we *don't* want servants. They are a nuisance. But if you could stay, we could share the work between us. You needn't feel obligated, you can do the work that's too heavy for Lawrence. You would be a great help to us, and I would mend and wash for you. You

could go hunting and horseback riding—oh, we could have such fun!”

“I think so, too,” said Gótzsche. “I, for my part, would like to stay, but if Merrild insists on moving on, I will stick with him and we will complete our plan together.”

It surprised me that Gótzsche was so easily won over. Ordinarily he was quite reserved. But I told him that if he wanted to stay, he should do so and I would move on alone. To this he would not listen, but insisted that we either stay together or move on together.

So there we were! All three were now trying to win me over. I had to use heavier bullets for my defence, and I said: “It isn’t that I don’t like your company—quite the contrary. I also like the place very much and the idea of working on the books together is more than tempting, but let’s look things squarely in the face. We can hardly say we know each other very well. And if we are up here all alone, we will be shut off from everything and everybody and be forced to live side by side day by day. The newness of the acquaintance will wear off. We will be like a party marooned on a desert island, or rather, a party wintering in the Arctic. We would probably be no better than other people in such circumstances and get on each other’s nerves, and the dream would end in disaster.—We have met, we have had a good time together, but we have come to the parting of the road and we must go our separate ways. Now we can part beautifully and I shall always remember this period with pleasure and gratitude.”

“Are you afraid?” Lawrence asked.

“No,” I answered, “not for myself, but there are four of us, and we are all human, and I have seen how you get irritated and annoyed with people and how rapidly you grew tired of the art colony. Even Mabel hardly lasted a month, and even though we might last twice that long, that would only be a part of our intended stay together. So why spoil the picture?”

“Quite,” said Lawrence, “I am tired of the spiteful childishness and playboy stupidity and pure greediness of most people, and of the dreadful ‘sub-art’ people in the

art colony as well. I want men with some honourable manhood in them. People as a whole do not know how to live, they only kill time. And they would rather pull life down than let it grow up. And their civilization I have only contempt and hatred for, with its masses, apparatuses, scheming, dollar-hunting, the will to possess and to own things. They forget the values of real life. We will have to be a few men with honour and fearlessness and make a life together. Up here, away from civilization, in the very heart of Nature, we can start a sort of new life. You and Gótzsche and we two have enough in common to live a life together, a life of our own. There is nothing else. The civilized world, believe me, has no life to offer."

"Thank you," I said and smiled. "But I don't think a step like this should be taken on the spur of a momentary, enthusiastic inspiration."

"I know we will get along," said Lawrence, "and your attitude merely convinces me that I am right. But perhaps you had better talk it over first. I suggest you go for a walk, it should be quite light outside, the moon must be up by now. Perhaps you can talk more freely when you are alone. One should not be bullied into things, best you arrive at your own decision."

How I liked him for that! How understanding! I wanted very much to talk it over with Gótzsche alone.

We opened the door and went outside.

"Now you take your time and be careful where you go and don't stumble," said Lawrence.

"Win him over, Gótzsche," shouted Mrs. Lawrence, as we started off.

The supreme beauty of the still, moon-lit winter night was so overpowering, immense and awe-inspiring, that it had a great deal to do with my decision.—Knowing well that an attempt to describe it can only be a feeble gesture, I must nevertheless try it.

When we emerged from the deep shadow of the huge pine trees that surrounded the ranch, we entered into the white, snow-clad alfalfa field. Overwhelmed by the grandeur of the sight, we stopped. I pulled myself erect and took a

deep breath, expanding my chest and filling it with the frost-sterilized, cold winter air, purified by the night and the beams of moonlight. One breathed not only the space of the universe but the solid mountains as well. The very roots of the coniferous trees extracted air from the rocks below, carried it through its stems and branches and effused it through the myriad of acicular leaves laden with aroma from the subterranean kernel and spiced with the fragrance of Mother Earth. The hairs in my nostrils vibrated with delight as the air filled my lungs. My chest expanded in an effort to take it all in. Expanded to the point of explosion. I felt like bursting into atoms to become one with the cosmos, to be blown into the spheres.

I looked up, and there was the moon, big and round, hanging low, incandescent, smiling—a pale, yellow-white, shining bright. The infinite, radiant, beaming stars, happily stepped off in perspective, leading the eye into the sky, into an endless space of indigo. My eyes followed a shooting star to the horizon. The snow-peaked mountains, majestic, immovable, were silhouetted in fantastic shapes against the indicolite sky, outlined in a phosphorescent aura.

Below was the silent forest, in its black vividity, still—and yet it seemed to move somnambulistically, extending itself to and surrounding the alfalfa field, the white enclosure, radiant, glittering as though sprinkled with diamonds.

We didn't speak. Slowly we walked, the crust of the frozen blanket of snow crackling beneath our feet. The night was alive in its stillness. The air vibrated with strange sounds. Now and then a lump of snow would fall from an overburdened branch and rustle to the ground. The owl hooted his monotonous cry, echoing through the forest. And at intervals, a pack of prairie wolves howled through the night. Instinctively, we halted for a moment, arrested by the quivering sound. The reiterated yelping of the coyotes faintly tickled the spine. In daring delight, we moved on. It was a thrill to be alive.

Our profound silence was broken by Gótzsche, who said: "I think it would be wonderful to stay up here for the winter."

"So do I," I said, "only one should not make a spontaneous decision in a case like this. Impulses are as often wrong as right. Many a disaster could have been avoided by a little thinking and foresight. I had the greatest desire to accept right away, when Lawrence suggested that we stay, but I cannot plunge into it blindly. Believe me, it is indeed very, very hard for me to resist, it all looks so wonderful. The experience we have already had is so beautiful that it would pain me to make a mess of it."

"It is all right to try to reason things out," said Gótzsche, "but one must also be willing to take a certain amount of risk."

"It isn't that I'm afraid of risking it," I answered. "A risk in itself is tempting and alluring, and I don't mind losing a game when I have done my best. If not, I feel a fool."

"You and the Lawrences rely too much on your feelings and I don't care if he says that I live too much from my head. Then that's me, I can't live only from my solar plexus. If I should see a person about to drown, my impulse would be to jump right in and save him. It might be disastrous to both if I didn't stop first to remove my coat and shoes. My feeling would drive me to the act, but the procedure would be ruled by reason. I like to dissect and analyze, to consider and reconsider in a case like this, to get it clear and to go into it with open eyes, if possible."

"Why should Lawrence encircle half the globe and take almost a year to make up his mind—or, as he would like to put it, his feelings—before they would permit him to come to America, as Mabel's guest? Call it what you like. Now we are confronted with the offer to be his guests, but we won't have a year in which to consult our feelings. We can only take a walk in the forest and must make up our minds in an hour. It seems stupendous."

We discussed the several reasons I had given for not accepting, and I ended up by saying, "But Lawrence is so vastly complex that one never knows what will happen next. You and I have already proved that we can live together. Mrs. Lawrence seems to be very easy-going, and he, too,

for that matter, at least with us. But we must admit that we know him only casually, even if we think we know him well and agree that we have never met a better man. But how is the man we shall learn to know better when we rub elbows with him, and how are we going to stack up? We have already seen how trying he can be with others. So if we decide to stay, let us vow fidelity to one another and to the life before us. Let us promise not to be swept off our feet when he gets one of his fits, and not to be impatient with his desultory moods. I don't mean, of course, that we should be a pair of ninnies. He, too, would not respect that. We must be ourselves, and as free and frank with him as we two are between ourselves; but let us be tolerant when he is off balance. He and the communion will be worth it."

"I am so excited about the whole idea," said Gótzsche, "that I can tolerate almost anything. Just think of a night like this—the grandeur of Nature, commissions for work we would like to do, and Lawrence, to boot! How can you resist it?"

"I am not resisting any longer. I haven't the heart to. I am willing to enter into the adventure and I agree with you that it will probably be one of the greatest experiences of our life, however it turns out."

Happy in our decision, we went back to the ranch and arrived at the cabin, where the Lawrences were anxiously awaiting our resolution. When we entered the kitchen, four eyes flashed at us, full of expectation, and before we could speak a word, Mrs. Lawrence cried out jubilantly, "They are going to stay."

We nodded our heads and said yes. Lawrence smiled with satisfaction and, very pleased, he said, "Good!" Mrs. Lawrence was overjoyed. She clapped her hands and shouted, "Hurray! How good! We are going to have such a jolly time together!"

We got seated, and I felt very strongly the flow between us. Lawrence often used the word "flow." I don't like it, something about the word is repulsive to me, I don't know what. But for want of another or better one, I shall probably go on using it just the same when I want to

express what I feel as a silent, invisible communication or intercourse in currents of emotion, thoughts, feelings, sympathy, understanding in a perfect unity.

As we were now completely tied together by corporate, everyday problems and became dependent on one another, the feeling of mere acquaintance faded away, to give birth to the beginning of friendship. Now we belonged to each other, we were united in a common life. And I felt as did Amiel, the Swiss writer, when he said: "In every union there is a mystery—a certain invisible bond which must not be disturbed."

We were all feeling happy and excited about the beginning of our new life. Mrs. Lawrence suggested that we discard the formality with which we had been addressing each other; she said, "Just call us Lorenzo and Frieda."

To this we would not agree, but compromised on abandoning the "Mr." all around, though retaining the "Mrs." Everybody who knows you here, even if it is only for half an hour, seems to take that liberty and we don't like it. Let us keep our relationship on a different level.

They both resented the American habit of getting familiar by addressing people by their Christian names, even people one hardly knew, and so did we. We did, however, speak of Mrs. Lawrence to him and between ourselves as "Frieda"; but never in speaking to her directly unless it fitted the moment, never generally. Gótzsche and I were spoken of as the Danes by everybody.

We started at once to discuss and lay plans for the near future and what to do the next morning. We talked far into the night. Before retiring, we three men went outside to make a part of our toilette, pass some excessive wind and have a look at the moon, etc., thereby giving Frieda a chance to undress and make her toilette and get into a nightgown before we entered again. The Lawrences were to sleep on a mattress placed on the floor in the one and only living-room. There was no door between this room and the kitchen, so we had nailed up a blanket over the opening. The Danes were to sleep on the kitchen floor. We blew out our candles and went to rest. We continued

to talk in the darkness, joking about our beds; and the Lawrences had a friendly argument about their bed coverings, accusing each other of taking more than a just share. Finally, we decided to go to sleep and bade each other good night, and emphasized the greeting, "Sleep well."

In the deep silence of the night, one became very conscious of the many noises in the dark. The fire in the stove burned away happily, blustering. The chipmunks ran gaily across the tin ceiling, clattering. And the mice and rats gnawed away under the floor, annoying. Outside, the coyotes howled at the moon, romantic. And at intervals, the owl totted his monotonous hoo, hoo, hoo, mysterious.

Lawrence responded to it all and made various comments. Presently one grew accustomed to the noises and just before sleep took one into oblivion, there was heard only the breathing of fellow-humans.

The morning was glorious, and happily we set about our day's work. I cannot emphasize enough how glad, gay and jolly we were, feeling pioneerish, so very happy and perfectly contented. And then, that very first day, our Paradise was destroyed—by whom but Mabel! Not in person, but she had sent a messenger to inform Lawrence that he could not have more than one cabin, the other would have to stay vacant for her son, when and if he should come up on a hunting trip. This was a brutal blow and shock to us. Seldom have I seen Lawrence so enraged. He broke out in a violent stream of curses and called Mabel all kinds of names. And he said:

"It's all a scheme, a nasty scheme. Oh yes, I see it now. When she so generously offered me the whole ranch, it was because she thought she would then have me safely put away up here, incommunicable and for her own convenience. She didn't figure you would be coming along. So now, by refusing me the other cabin, she wants to kill two birds with one stone. She wants to get rid of you. She can't bear that I seek other company than hers. And thinking we cannot all live in the one cabin, she thinks I will have to let you go. But how mistaken she is! We could easily manage to live in the one house, even with

the other standing vacant for her son.—How I hate and detest such scheming!

"I am a fool, talking to them, giving myself away to them, as to Mabel. Why, Mabel ought to go down on her knees before the honour! Instead of which, she puffs herself up, and spits venom into my face like a cobra.

"Very well, very well. I can go out of her sight again, for I loathe the sight of her. How unspeakably repulsive she is to me! How I despise her! I feel like a man whom the snake-worshipping savages have thrown into one of their snake-pits. They are all snakes, and if I touch a single one of them, it will bite me. But they shall not bite me. God in Heaven, no, they shall not bite me. Snakes that they are—and the world is a snake-pit into which one is thrown. But as sure as God is God, they shall not bite me. I will crush their heads, rather.

"Am I not a fool, a pure crystal of a fool? I thought she would accept me for what I am, for the man I am. And she, and the rest, only accept me for the me she wants me to be, her pet. She only accepts me because she gets herself glorified out of me.

"I thought at least they would give me a certain reverence, because I am myself and because I am different, in the name of the Lord. But they have all got their fangs full and surcharged with insult, to vent it on me the moment I go on my own. The moment she thinks I trespass on her, she unsheathes her fangs. But I shall take nothing from her. Absolutely I must have nothing from her, not so much as to let her carry a cup of tea for me unpaid. They shall give me nothing.

"If they guess a new thing in me, it only makes them churn their bile and secrete their malice into a passion that would corrode the face of the Lord. I must make my own world."

Gótzsche and I felt badly about it and suggested that we had better leave and go on to California. The mere thought of it infuriated Lawrence still more. "I will have none of that," he said. "She can keep her damn ranch. Our life shall not be killed, it has been born to live. We will find another place."

That same afternoon Lawrence and Gótzsche went out scouting in the mountains while Frieda and I stayed behind. When they came back, it was with the good news that they had come upon the Del Monte Ranch, where they had found two abandoned log cabins and rented them for the winter from the rancher who lived nearby.

The only drawback was that Lawrence had to pay so much of the little money he had for the rent. We would now have even less to live on than before and would have to economize even more and live as simply as possible. But, as he said, "We shan't need much, we will get along, so why worry?"

We decided to pack up and leave the next morning for Taos, where we would gather up all our belongings, prepare for the winter and then move up to Del Monte Ranch to stay.

When we arrived in Taos, we found that Mabel had fled. She had run away to Santa Fé. She didn't have the courage to face Lawrence after the dirty trick she had played on us. But what did we care! It only made it easier. We would be spared the sight of her and she the expression of our feeling of utter disgust and Lawrence's infuriated hatred.

When we had everything arranged and packed and ready to go, I had to be left behind. I had developed a large gumboil and was in a feverish condition. But the Ufers kindly offered to put me up on a couch in their combination dining- and living-room. So there I was, installed on the couch, and left alone while they departed with good wishes and greetings of "auf wiedersehn."

I was left in good hands, however, and Mrs. Ufer took motherly care of me. She even scolded her husband, that dear old brute, when he couldn't resist teasing me about my swollen face. It was there, on the couch, that I received my first letter or note from Lawrence. I could visualize the trouble they must have had with the car and the shack that was to be my future home for some time. It had to be fumigated, there was no glass in the windows, etc. But here is the letter:

“DEL MONTE RANCH, VALDEZ,
Saturday.”

DEAR MERRILD—Lizzie was awful—Sabino had to pull us in with horses. But we are here. It is very nice.

Buy india rubber boots from McCarty's store, the white ones, \$4.50 a pair. Buy a pair also for Gótzsche—(I don't mean overshoes, but india rubber boots).

Buy also some fumigating stuff from the drug store, to fumigate your cabin.

And two pieces of glass, one $17\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the other 8 inches by 12 inches.

Bring a pound of cheese.

Did Higgins change the mail address?

I'll pay the things.

Great fun up here—have been out all morning getting wood. Do hope your face-swelling is better.

Greet Ufer and Mrs. Ufer, and be greeted.

D. H. LAWRENCE.”

My face swelling was not getting any better, in fact it was getting worse. It had swollen to such an extent that one eye was completely closed. The pain was growing unbearable and in a moment's tense agony, I jumped up from my couch, wrapped my head in Mabel's multi-coloured scarf, and despite the snowstorm, ran over to the dentist's office. I pleaded with him to lance the boil, but he would not. It wasn't ripe yet, he said.

While I was sitting in the dentist's chair, a man walked in and said to the dentist in a grave tone: “Have you got your guns ready, Jim (Jack or whatever he called him)? We've got to send a posse up into the mountains after those bank robbers from Colorado.”

I got so excited that for the moment I forgot my agony and asked if I could come along, to which the dentist just said very simply, “No! You go home pronto and stay there, and if the boil doesn't burst before I return, you can come back tomorrow afternoon and I think we can lance it then.”

I got some stuff to make me sleep and I awoke the next morning greatly relieved. The boil had broken during the

night. I was happy. Now I would soon be ready to leave, the only question being how to get up there. Not everybody had cars those days. Lawrence had pinned his hope to John Evans, Mabel's son, but his reply was simply, "I'm not running a taxicab business!" So there I was, apparently stranded for the time being. So, as I didn't come up to the ranch, I had another note from Lawrence.

"DEL MONTE RANCH, VALDEZ,
Tuesday.

DEAR MERRILD—Pity you couldn't come out yesterday. William Hawk is coming in on *Thursday* with his Ford. He will bring you out if you don't come before.

Gótzsche says bring a tin of varnish remover, and look at *canvas*, at Gerson's.

Did you get the other goods, or not?—Greet the Ufers,
D. H. LAWRENCE."

None of us had wanted to ask Ufer to take me up. He was at present working feverishly at a large canvas, so we didn't want to disturb him. And when he was working, as it seemed to me he always was, he worked hard, from morning till night, every day, Sunday included, and never took time off for anything. It was therefore a surprise to me when he said, "It seems nobody wants to take you up to the ranch. Well, I'll do it. We will go tomorrow if the weather permits."

And so we did. When we started off, I thought we would make it in a jiffy, but it was not without difficulty that his big Buick touring car finally brought us in to the ranch. There was much agitation when we arrived. Everybody came out to greet us. The Lawrences wanted Ufer to stay for a while, but he refused. As he said, "The road is very bad. I can easily get stuck, so I want to get a good start in order to be out of the mountains and down on the desert by nightfall."

We didn't detain him, but thanked him for bringing me up and wished him good luck on his way back.

That he had left his work and gone to all that trouble to take me up here impressed Lawrence very much. He

took it as a personal favour rendered him also, and was very grateful for it. He said, as Ufer left, "You might call him a brute and a bully, but he has his heart in the right place. One can't help liking him for that."

Once more united, we were eager and determined to set out on our new life at Del Monte. With all ties severed from Mabel and Taos, away from civilization and everybody, its success rested within ourselves and seemed assured.

DEL MONTE RANCH

THE site at Del Monte was much like the Lobo Ranch we had just left, only much larger. We had the mountains back of us and were surrounded by endless forests. On the slope was a plateau with a rather large alfalfa field, and below, a grand view of the vast desert with its mesas and blue, snow-capped mountain ridges on the horizon.

The ranch had formerly been three smaller ones, but was now owned and operated as one by the present rancher, who had built himself a large house. The two log cabins we were to occupy were the long-abandoned homes of the former pioneer ranchers, and on our arrival were being used as storerooms. The ranch house and the two cabins formed a sort of triangle, with the ranch house situated between the two cabins—and all three houses a few minutes' walk from each other.

We were now confronted with the task of putting them in shape for living quarters. This work was already well under way on the largest cabin, the one the Lawrences were to occupy, when I arrived. The Lawrences and Gótzsche had been working hard, but there was still some days' work on our own cabin. In the meantime, we all lived at the Lawrences' cabin. We worked hard at roofing, carpentering, plastering, glazing, paperhanging, painting, whitewashing, etc. Frieda was busy sewing curtains and the like. Lawrence enjoyed himself thoroughly doing all these odd jobs. It felt good to be a labourer. One of us suggested that we form a Del Monte Local of the I.W.W.

When Lawrence's cabin—or house, as we called it, was finished, he and Frieda helped us fix up our cabin. First we had to fumigate. I remember how we cut newspapers into strips and pasted them around door and window openings, covering and sealing all cracks before we proceeded to fumigate. It didn't take long to put our place

in shape, as there was only one room—a kitchen and a storeroom.

With our houses in order, our next job was to get wood for the winter. We had to find a large tree that had been dead for a long time, to be sure the wood would be dry. We circled around in the forest till we found one that suited our purpose. Our search was rewarded the first day, about noontime. It was a huge, very beautiful and majestic balsam pine, as Lawrence called it. It was about eight to ten feet in circumference at the base and very tall, perhaps seventy-five to eighty feet high. It seemed to be fully withered and had been dead for a long time. We were sure it would furnish wood for both cabins and last all winter. We went straight to Lawrence's house for lunch, telling Frieda about our find as if it had been a gold mine. Eagerly we discussed how to go about felling it, and the danger in hewing a tree of this size. Frieda wasn't at all happy at the thought of three such amateur woodsmen attempting the task.

"Do be careful," she pleaded when we left.

From the ranch we borrowed a cross-cut, two-handed saw, some axes, several wedges and a coil of rope. When we reached our tree, one of us climbed up into it and fastened the rope, leaving both ends hanging loose to the ground. We then decided where we wanted it to fall and started the work. When we had cut and chopped enough away from the base of the trunk, two of us pulled the rope and the huge tree fell gracefully where we had wanted it to fall, and we patted our chests at our cleverness. Then we cut all the branches off and started to saw the trunk into pieces, and that part of the job was not play, but plain, hard labour. It took us several days to do it, taking turns. Lawrence did his share. Although he tired quickly, he stubbornly kept on, but beefing all the time—the saw wouldn't run smoothly, and it was our fault. "Don't push—do as I do—can't you see—" and so on. It amused us that he thought himself so clever, when it was he who was at fault. So I said to him: "It would be interesting to know why it is that when Gótzsche and I saw



The Dane's Cabin, Del Monte Ranch, 1922



Lawrence and Frieda outside their house on Del Monte Ranch, 1922-3

together, it runs smoothly *all* the time; but when either of us saws with you, we get stuck every time."

He looked at me and smiled in acknowledgement, but he said: "It's because you are both doing it wrong."

He just wouldn't be told anything; he was preaching and teaching all the time. We excused him on the ground that he was simply bodily tired and would not admit it. When we suggested that we do the work without him, he would not listen.

The last day we worked on the tree out there in the forest, we worked late in order to finish the job. The sun had just set and all was still, when a prairie or mountain wolf sent forth a howl. It came from behind a cedar bush not ten feet away from us and it was apparently a call from the leader, for a whole pack of them started to howl in unison. We were surrounded by coyotes. Instinctively, we stood still. For a moment we were arrested. It did not frighten us, but we all agreed that the sudden, unexpected howl tickled the spine. Armed with axes and wedges, we inspected the far side of the cedar bush from which the noise had first come, but without result. We didn't even get a glimpse of one. We were disappointed at not having seen even one or getting a chance, at least, to throw a wedge or stone after one. Lawrence said coyotes were cowards. We talked about coyotes and wolves on our way home.

The next day we were to fetch the wood home. For this purpose we rented a team of horses and a wagon from the rancher. When we were half-way to our timber lot, we came to a ditch that had been easy for us to jump, but we could not get across it with horses and wagon. We had not foreseen this, but it didn't stump us. Resolutely, we felled some small trees and built a bridge with the trunks. It delayed us an hour or so, but we didn't mind it. To meet obstacles and conquer them rather pleased us. In order to make headway through the forest for the team, we had to fell several trees. We arrived at our destination to discover that many of the logs were too heavy for us to lift, even to roll on poles on to the wagon. It was quite

a job to split these logs with wedges so that we could handle them.

When we were hauling the last load home, we had a scare. Lawrence and I were walking behind the wagon and Gótzsche was driving the horses, walking at the side. When we came to our provisional bridge, we encountered our usual difficulties in getting the team across. We did a lot of coaxing but to no avail. The horses stayed on the spot, just moving their feet up and down, jerking and jumping without moving forward. When they finally decided to move on, one of the horses stepped through the bridge planks. Stricken with panic, they started a runaway, pulling Gótzsche, who was holding the reins, into the ditch, and with the sudden jerk spilling some of the heavy logs. Fortunately, none of these struck Gótzsche. He was none the worse for the accident. The horse didn't break his leg, either, and the team didn't get far away with the heavy load, and all was well when we arrived home.

Our heaviest job, but not the least interesting, was over. Before us we now had many days of monotonous work in sawing, splitting and chopping all the wood to fit our stoves and fireplaces. From morning till night we worked hard, taking turns at the big saw. It was real labour, really too heavy for Lawrence, and after a couple of days, Frieda made him give it up. But it was not without a fight that he gave in. He didn't like Frieda's saying he wasn't strong enough.

"Rot," he grunted. "If the Danes can do it, I can do it, too. I don't want them to saw my wood."

"Nonsense," we said, "we are glad to do it for you. You do many other things for us."

But it was only by means of a compromise that he gave in. We had to let him chop the smaller pieces for kindling wood. He wanted to do his share. He was really a good sport.

And so it was, and we were glad, too. It had hurt us to see him strain himself. He did not have the strength to be efficient with heavy tools, he looked awkward and clumsy, and so was the work he did which required strength

in execution. What he could handle with ease he did skilfully and well, and he enjoyed doing.

There was not much difference in our sizes and ages. Lawrence was thirty-six, Gótzsche thirty-four, and I twenty-eight, but nevertheless we were much handier and much more familiar with tools, more strongly built and, because of our athletic training, in better physical shape than he. And I for my part, as I told him, had the year before taken some odd jobs as labourer, steeplejack, helper in building smoke-stacks and in building steel and concrete construction works. I had been riding and handling heavy steel beams, had mixed cement and gravel by hand and hauled it in wheelbarrows on scaffolding, etc.—not to speak of the pushing of our automobile we had both had to do on all the steep hills across the entire country. This, and living on simple food and sleeping outdoors, had given us stamina and kept us in splendid condition. So physically, Lawrence really wasn't a match for us. He knew it and accepted it, and later on he would ask us to do work that was too heavy for him, which we were of course only too glad to do.

After the heavy work and all the house cleaning we all felt we needed a cleaning ourselves and wanted a good bath. This, however, was not so easy, as we had no bathing facilities on the place unless we were prepared to chop a hole in the ice and take a dip in the cold water of the creek, or a rubdown with snow. We felt inclined to do neither, so we decided to go to the hot springs, some seventeen to twenty miles away.

As there was much snow in the mountains and the roads were in a very slippery condition, we dared not go in our car, so we rented four saddle horses from the rancher and started on a trip that nearly ended in mishap at the outset.

Lawrence was given the only real horse, a beautiful sorrel, very shy and very quick. The rest of us rode cow ponies, Frieda on "Brownny," Gótzsche on "Pinto," and I, the last chooser, on "Lady." She was an ambler who meandered like a camel with her peculiar gait and was very hard to get accustomed to, but later, I would not change her for any of the others.

The sorrel was a much taller horse than our cow ponies,

so Lawrence towered above us, a real general. He looked well on the horse. He had on a huge, grey, five-gallon hat, a leather jacket and checkered trousers tucked into a pair of long, high-heeled riding boots. His horse pranced and side-stepped, strutting about in a lively manner. He took the lead of the small caravan and we proceeded down the mountain-side through the forest. We had not gone far before the shy sorrel got frightened. She reared on her hind legs, made a leap to one side, and in a wild panic went off with Lawrence, who instantly and completely lost control of her. He hobbled up and down, and every second we feared he would be thrown, but he hung on. Lagging behind, we followed on the ponies. The sorrel, in its wild dash, came to the edge of a ravine, did not stop nor alter its course but plunged down the side, barely missing the trees on its way. Lawrence ducked his head to avoid being brushed off by the dangerous, low-hanging branches. One scratched him and tore off his hat. We were almost afraid to look, but we followed as best we could. Then the sorrel stumbled as she reached the bottom of the ravine. Lawrence immediately seized the opportunity, reined it in and got control just as Gótzsche and I rode up to his side. The presence of the other horses soon quieted the shy sorrel and we went up the ravine and joined Frieda, who had been a frightened spectator.

Lawrence was of course a bit shaken, but it didn't take him long to regain his sureness. We continued on our way as if nothing had happened and Lawrence took the lead in the single file. Where space would permit it, we rode side by side so that we could converse. Naturally, Lawrence talked about his experience on the runaway horse. I don't remember it word for word, but he has described the episode in one of his books, so I will let him talk. He speaks of himself as Jack. Here it is, in part: "... because it was natural for his legs to grip and stick, Jack stuck on.—His bones rattled, his hat flew off, his heart beat high. But unless the horse came down backwards on top of him, he could stay on. And he was not really afraid. He thought: 'If he doesn't go down backwards on top of me,

I shall be all right.'—He tried to quiet the horse. 'Steady now, steady!' he said, in a low, intimate voice. 'Steady, boy!' And all the time he held on with his thighs and knees, like iron. He did not believe in the innate viciousness of the horse. He never believed in the innate viciousness of anything, except a man. And he did not want to fight the horse for simple mastery. He wanted just to hold it hard with his legs until it soothed down a little, and he and it could come to an understanding. But he must never relax the hold of his hard legs, or he was dead.—He stuck on with the lower half of his body like a vice, feeling as if his head would be jerked off his shoulders. It was becoming hard work. But he knew, unless he stuck on, he was a dead man.—Jack was conscious of a body of live muscle and palpitating fire between his legs, of a furious head tossing hair like hot wire, and bits of white foam. Also he was aware of the trembling in his own thighs, and the sensual exertion of gripping that hot, wild body in the power of his own legs. Gripping the hot horse in a grip of sensual mastery that made him tremble strangely with a curious quivering. Yet he dared not relax.—The horse bolted like the wind, and Jack held on with his knees and by balance. He was thrilled, really: frightened externally, but internally keyed up; and never for a moment did he relax his mind's attention, nor the attention of his own tossed body.—Up he went, off the saddle, and down he came again, with a shattering jerk, down on the front of the saddle. The balance he kept was a mystery even to himself, his body was so flung about by the volcano of furious life beneath him. He felt himself shaken to pieces, his bones rattled all out of socket.—The slim straight trees slipped past, the motion of the horse surging her own way was exhilarating to a degree.—She turned into bigger timber, much bigger and with hanging limbs.—He kept his eyes open, till he knew by second sight when to duck. He reined in the horse, pulling it almost on to its haunches.—He held on like a vice with his knees, for the horse was pawing the air, frantic at being held up."

* * *

As Lawrence was leading, he naturally set the tempo, which of course was his steady trot. But when we reached the foothills and entered the road, Gótzsche said to me:

"This trotting business is becoming too much like work. I want a little fun besides."

And so he spurred his horse with his heel and galloped past the rest of us. But Lawrence, too, let loose in pursuit and soon overtook him. Pinto was no match for the sorrel. Lawrence said something, and they both reined in the horses and changed to a walking gait. When Frieda and I came trotting up, I heard Lawrence say, in a half-irritated, half-scolding voice, "This horse is so shy and nervous, it can't stand to have any other in the lead. It becomes restless and unruly and very hard to handle. You must stay behind."

Gótzsche got sore as a crab at being told off and continued to walk his horse as we trotted on and soon lost sight of him.

This worried Lawrence and he said, "I wonder what has become of Gótzsche."

"He is all right," I said.

"Cross, I suppose," said Frieda, and to Lawrence, "You shouldn't speak like that. You are like the horse you are on. You can't bear to have anybody ahead of you. I wouldn't blame him if he has gone home."

They exchanged some remarks and we rode on in silence.

Gótzsche's absence weighed on Lawrence's mind. He really didn't want to hurt Gótzsche and he said to me, "What do you suppose has become of Gótzsche?"

And I replied, "Don't worry about it. He just wants to have his own way a bit, and some fun, and if he can't gallop in front of you, he will gallop behind you. Pretty soon he will come galloping and catch up with us."

And so he did. He joined us in single file and we continued as though nothing had happened. But occasionally Gótzsche repeated his lagging behind, joined by me. I, too, liked to gallop a bit. It amused Lawrence.

We had our bath and returned home, happy but tired. Frieda was very tired. It was really too much for her.

Some thirty to forty miles on horseback, when not in training, is enough for anybody.

With our houses in order, clean bodies and enough wood chopped to last for some time, we settled down to a more easy and leisurely life. Heretofore we had spent most of the time at the Lawrences' house and had been eating all our meals there except breakfast, but now that each of us was to pursue his art, we established separate housekeeping and naturally planned to live more privately than before, with more individual freedom.

In our household, Gotzsche did the cooking and I washed the dishes and cleaned the house. I also had to fetch the water. This was easy enough in the beginning. I got it from the creek running just outside the cabin. But as the winter grew colder, the creek froze to the bottom and I had to go upstream to Lawrence's waterhole. But this froze eventually also, and he and I had to go further up the mountains with our pails and hatchets and chop holes in the ice until the winter finally froze us out of water.

There was, however, a large basin of water at the ranch, but as one of the pigs, early in the winter, had fallen through the thin ice and drowned and was still in there, we didn't feel inclined to use that water for anything but washing our linen and underwear. So we had to melt snow on the stove to get water for our cooking and drinking. To melt snow is a very slow process, so we economized on water as much as possible. We didn't even use it on ourselves. We simply went outside and took rubdowns with the snow.

Owing to our limited resources and distance from any town, our food was necessarily very simple. We ate a lot of porridge, oatmeal, both for breakfast and supper, potatoes, salt meat, bacon and sausages, not to mention heaps of apples. The rancher had more apples than he could sell, so he fed them to the pigs and to us. We could have all we wanted. Lawrence made apple cider for us and Gótsche taught him to fry apples with bacon, a delicious Danish dish we had very often. Milk and butter we had daily, but not much. Eggs were scarce and only occasionally we could

buy a bit of fresh meat from the rancher, and sometimes a chicken or two from the Mexican village down below. Almost at will I could go out and shoot wild rabbit and cottontail which were plentiful, but one can get tired of eating too much rabbit.

Lawrence baked our bread, and except for the first few loaves, which were vile, he did it well, very well indeed. He was a splendid cook, too. Once or twice during the week, and always on Sunday, we had dinner or supper at Lawrence's. He would prepare a really swell meal, assisted by Frieda. I have not tasted a better roast with mint sauce, Yorkshire pudding or mince meat anywhere in England.

Perhaps it sounds funny that Lawrence did the cooking. But Frieda was born and raised in the German nobility, and during her first marriage always had servants about her, so that she had had very little experience in domestic work during her life. What she knew by this time Lawrence had taught her. She was a pretty fair cook, but nevertheless Lawrence couldn't refrain from his everlasting teaching. It was often decided that Frieda should make a meal for us all by herself, just to show that she could, but Lawrence couldn't keep his nose out of the kitchen, and soon he would have his fingers in pots and pans despite Frieda's protest and ours. It took all the joy out of it for her, of course. Naturally, we sided with her, but she took it well. But Lawrence just smiled like a naughty boy who knows he is wrong. If she had lost interest in cooking it would be comprehensible, but she didn't, at least not when she was let alone. I remember that when we went out on excursions or to the hot springs without her, she would, on our arrival, meet us on the porch, beaming with joy, telling us what a delicious, big meal she had prepared for us. And it was. It always tasted good. There would be only one thing left to do: "The tea!" and that, of course, Lawrence simply had to do, or something was sure to be wrong.

They both liked to do things and to help others. Frieda did a lot of sewing and embroidering, and strange as it may seem, she liked to do a big washing. I have often seen her

at the laundry tub, powerfully and energetically scrubbing away on the tray, spilling water everywhere. The apron over her hitched-up skirts was not much of a protection and she got all wet, but she was hardly aware of it. She was all work, warm and perspiring. I have helped her to wring out the washing and spread the big sheets out on the frozen snow to dry and bleach. With her hands resting on her hips, she would look at it with delight and pride.

"How nice and clean it is now," she would say. "Look at it, it is whiter than the snow."

Or as Lawrence said, "She washed her linen herself for the sheer joy of it, and loved nothing so much as thinking of it getting whiter and whiter, like the Spencerian maid, in the sun and sea, and visiting it on the grass every five minutes, and finding it every time really whiter," till Lawrence said it would reach a point of whiteness where the colours would break up, and she'd go out and find pieces of rainbow on the grass and bushes, instead of towels and shirts.

"Shouldn't I be startled!" she said, accepting it as quite a possible contingency, and adding thoughtfully, "No, not really."

On one of our first days there, she came down to our cabin with some curtains she had made for us. She noticed that we had neither bedsheets nor pillows, and remarked about it, saying she would make us some. We told her not to, the blankets were all right and that we rolled up our sweaters and used them for pillows. Nevertheless, a few days later, she presented us with sheets and pillows. She also knitted us a pair of woollen caps, made so they could be pulled over the ears to protect them from the frosty air. And many other things she noticed and did for us. She was really very wonderful, she took good, motherly care of us.

If Lawrence did the greatest share of work around his house, it is mentioned without injustice to Frieda. He loved to do things. Even the most trivial he did with care, if not with real joy. It was almost a religion with him. He often spoke of it and said, "It is good for one to do all these

small, everyday jobs. It is part of life. Everybody should know how to prepare a meal, clean a house, chop wood, etc."

"It is the perfect adjusting of ourselves to the elements," he said, "the perfect equipoise between them and us, which gives us a great part of our life-joy. The more machinery intervenes between us and the naked forces, the more we numb and atrophy our own senses. Every time we turn on a tap to have water, every time we turn a handle to have fire or light, we deny ourselves and annul our being. The great elements, the earth, air, fire, water, are there like some great mistress with whom we woo and struggle, with whom we heave and wrestle. And all our appliances do but deny us these fine embraces, take the miracle of life away from us."

As time went on, we entered into a more or less set schedule of activity. After breakfast, Gótzsche would go for a walk and fetch the mail from the primitive mail box. It was simply an old packing box with leather hinges placed between the forked branches of a tree by the roadside, about five minutes away. This he would bring to Lawrence. Then he would come back to our cabin. I had tidied up, meanwhile. Then he would start painting or go out sketching. I would go for my walk, fetch water, come home and do likewise.

Lawrence, after his domestic work, would answer his letters, write poetry or other works. In the afternoon, he would post his letters in the mail box, and on his way back, always stop in at our cabin for a cup of tea. This tea visit became a regular thing and he always stayed till sundown. Often he would come right after lunch, as early as one o'clock, and stay all afternoon.

Although we maintained separate households, we spent much time together, seldom less than three to five hours daily and frequently all day, from breakfast to bedtime. At these daily tea-parties, we would sit on stools, or on the floor around the fireplace, and just talk, often launching into strong discussions, or at other times simply listening to Lawrence expounding his viewpoints to us. Whether we agreed with him or not, or fought, or whether Lawrence had infected us with his bitterness on the rottenness of the



Frieda Lawrence on her pet horse, Azul

world, there was always an undercurrent of something I cannot explain. A unity of manly togetherness, understanding, fidelity. We were at peace even in disturbances. And when I think of us, Lawrence and the two Danes together, I confess to myself that it is these hours I treasure as among the most precious memories of my life.

Gótzsche and I found Lawrence very fascinating and were always happy just to listen to what he had to say. Since he felt this sympathy in his listeners, he would, without the slightest self-consciousness, talk and talk at great length; and he talked as brilliantly and frankly as he wrote. He had the "gift of interest" and could make one interested in almost anything. He could be witty in ordinary chatter, but it never took him long to go from the silliest gossip to a literary display of the highest rank. As a point of etiquette or just to be nice, he might flatter, but in his work, criticism and discussion, he was strictly and scrupulously honest. He was a man of many moods, but never dull.

When I think of him now, he appears as a kind, serious man—a man who took life, or being, very seriously. Sometimes he would brood, but more often he was gay, even to playfulness. He could be bitter and sometimes exploded in a fury of hatred toward the humbug and rottenness of present-day civilization, its society and people. He hated bullying, people trying to alter one into an approximation of themselves. He had no social, moral or intellectual affectations and was free from any kind of snobbery. He had his fits once in a while, but on the whole, in everyday life he was easy going. A man of strong personality and character, almost overpowering and absolutely fearless.

Frieda would occasionally tease him about having a Christ-complex, and about still being the school-teacher. I am not qualified to judge about this supposed complex, but there were many Christ-qualities in Lawrence. The figure interested him a great deal and here are some of the things he said:

"What we have to remember is that the great religious images are only images of our own experience, or of our own state of mind and soul.

"Now, man cannot live without some vision of himself. But still less can he live with a vision that is not true to his inner experience and inner feeling. And the vision of Christ Child and Christ crucified are both untrue to the inner experience and feeling of the young. They don't feel that way. They show the greatest forbearance and tolerance of their elders, for whom the two images are livingly true. But for the post-war young, neither the Christ Child nor Christ crucified means much.

"Christ risen in the flesh! The final vision that has been blurred to all the churches. We must accept the image complete, if we accept it at all. We must take the mystery in its fulness and in fact. It is only the image of our experience. Christ rises when He rises from the dead, in the flesh, not merely as spirit. He rises with hands and feet, as Thomas knew for certain: and if with hands and feet, then with lips and stomach and genitals of a man. Christ risen, and risen in the whole of this flesh, not with some left out.

"And Jesus was risen flesh and blood. He rose a man on earth to live on earth. The greatest test was still before him: His life as a man on earth. Hitherto He had been a sacred child, a teacher, a messiah, but never a full man. Now, risen from the dead, He rises to be a man on earth, and live the life of the flesh, the great life among other men. This is the image of our inward state today.

"This is the image of the young. The risen Lord. The teaching is over, the crucifixion is over, the sacrifice is made, the salvation is accomplished. Now comes the true life, man living his full life on earth.

"If Jesus rose from the dead in triumph, a man on earth triumphant in renewed flesh, triumphant over the mechanical anti-life convention of Jewish priests, Roman despotism, and universal money-lust; triumphant above all over His own self-absorption, self-consciousness, self-importance, triumphant and free as a man in full flesh and full, final experience, even the accomplished acceptance of his own death; a man at last full and free in flesh and soul, a man at one with death: then He rose to

become at one with life, to live the great life of the flesh and the soul together.

"If Jesus rose as a full man, in full flesh and soul, then He rose to take a woman to himself, to live with her, and to know the tenderness and blossoming of the twoness with her. He who had been so limited to his oneness, or his universality, which is the same thing. He rose to know the great pleasure of her, to know the responsibility and delight of children, to have friends, to do his share in the world's work. He rose to continue His fight with the hard-boiled conventionalists, like Roman judges and Jewish priests and money-makers of every sort. But this time it would no longer be the fight of self-sacrifice, that would end in crucifixion. This time it would be a freed man fighting to shelter the rose of life from being trampled on by the pigs.

"This time if Satan attempted temptation in the wilderness, the risen Lord would answer: Satan, your silly temptations no longer tempt me. Luckily, I have died to that sort of self-importance and self-conceit. I want life, and the pure contact with life. What are riches, and glory and honour, and might, and power to me, who have died and lost my self-importance? That's why I am going to take them all from you, Satan or Mammon or whatever your name is, because I care nothing about them. I am going to destroy all your values, Mammon; all your money values and conceit values. Because only life is lovely, and you, Mammon, prevent life.

"But that which is anti-life, Mammon, Satan like you, and money, and machines, and prostitution, and all that tangled mass of self-importance and greediness and self-conscious conceit which adds up to Mammon, I hate it. I hate it, Mammon, I hate you and am going to push you off the face of the earth—Mammon, you great mobthing, fatal to men."

He evoked new rhythms, sleeping energies, and cleared one's vision. Even if one protested, something he had said, it would sooner or later pop up in one's thought or experience as one's own, except that one realized it had been revealed by him. He made one conscious of a new awareness. I will not say he changed one, but rather that he scrubbed one

in a spiritual bath. One was still the same, but life within and without pulsed more quickly, more colourfully and in a clearer light.

If he was one thing, he was also the opposite. If he was sunshine and heat, he was also darkness and rain. He was not just one colour but the combination of them all. He was the whole rainbow.

Or, as he said himself, "Every man, as long as he remains alive, is in himself a multitude of conflicting men."

Even if bitter, erratic, or in a rage, there was always afterwards the warmth of his heart and soul and the keen understanding of his penetrating mind.

He was strong and he was weak, he was love and hatred, logic and illogic, everything in the human spectrum. So utterly human could he be, with all the petty faults of humans, that his greatness would for a moment tumble like a house of cards before one's feet, one's wondering. But I will say of him as he wrote:

"Even the rainbow has a body
made of the drizzling rain
and is an architecture of glistening atoms
built up, built up
yet you can't lay your hand on it,
nay, nor even your mind."

On one of the first visits he made to our cabin, we talked about literature. We asked him what he thought of Scandinavian writers, and Danish writers in particular. I don't remember his words, but he was not enthusiastic and criticized them strongly. He had some respect for Kirkegaard, and of Hamsun he liked "Pan" the best, and J. P. Jacobsen he only knew slightly, but wanted to read more of him. We talked about Ibsen, Strindberg, Lagerlöf, Nexó, and many others, but I don't remember his view. He did not fully approve, of course.

I told him I had never read any of his books. His only reply was, "Why should you? I don't want people to read my books."

A few days later, however, he gave me his "Women in Love" with a dedication, and others of his books soon followed.

It was not long after reading his books that I noticed he talked novels, his own novels, only more elaborately so. In reading most of his books, I have not found anything that was not encountered in our many discussions. To quote Lawrence is to quote his books. To know him, read his books—perhaps best of all, his letters, edited by Aldous Huxley.

Under many different names and aspects he appears again and again in his books. He is not only himself, he is it all—man, woman, earth, stone, sky and the elements as well—and child, birds, beasts and flowers—it is all he. Among the many disguised, written portraits of himself, there is one profile that to me so obviously fits him that I cannot refrain from quoting.

“He always kept a certain unpassable space around him, a definite *noli me tangere* distance which gave the limit to all approach. It would have been difficult to define this reserve. Jack seemed absolutely the most open and accessible individual in the world, a perfect child. He seemed to lay himself far too open to anybody’s approach. But those who knew him better—like his mother—knew the cold inward reserve, the savage unwillingness to be touched, which was central in him, as in a wolf cub. There was something reserved, fierce and untouched at the very centre of him. Something at the centre of all his openness and his seeming softness, that was cold, overbearing and a little angry. This was the old overwhelming English blood in him which would never really yield to promiscuity, or to vulgar intimacy. He seemed to mix in with everybody at random. But as a matter of fact, he had never finally mixed in with anybody, not even with his own father and mother, not even with Tom. And certainly not with any casual girl. Essentially, he kept himself a stranger to everybody.

“Everybody had a queer respect for Jack. They dared not be very familiar with him, but they didn’t resent him. He had a good aura. The other men might jeer sometimes at his frank but unapproachable aloofness, his subtle delicacy, and his simple sort of pride. Yet when he was spoken to, his answer was so much in the spirit of the

question, so frank, that you couldn't resent him. In ordinary things he was gay and completely one of themselves. The self that was beyond them he never let intrude. Hence their curious respect for him. Because there was something extraordinary in him. The biggest part of himself he kept entirely to himself, and the curious sombre steadfastness inside him made shifty men uneasy with him. He could never completely mix in, in the vulgar way, with men. He would take a drink with the rest, and laugh and talk half an hour away. Even get a bit tipsy and talk rather brilliantly. But always at the back of his eyes was this sombre aloofness, that could never come forward and meet and mingle, but held back, apart, waiting."

Contrary to custom, both Lawrence and Frieda had one day gone together for the morning mail. On their way back they stopped at our cabin, where they opened and read the letters. We all sat around the fireplace. It was quite a large mail, many letters from friends, relatives and business connections. As Lawrence rapidly went through each letter, he crumpled the envelope in the palm of his hand and threw it on the fire. He read them with a sort of loathing, one after the other, piling them up on his left for Frieda to read. He made remarks on each one, mostly sarcastic. He found them materialistic, empty and meaningless, dull as dishwater, and of no use to anybody. By the time he had done, he wished that every mail boat would go down that was bringing any letter to him. That a flood would rise and cover Europe entirely, that he could have a little operation performed that would remove from him for ever his memory of Europe and everything in it—"that horrible, horrible staleness of Europe, and all their trite consciousness, and their dreariness. The dreariness! The sterility of their feelings! A tangle of quibbles. I'd rather be shot here next week than quibble the rest of my life away in over-upholstered Europe."

He was of course promptly lectured by Frieda. He was sitting on the floor with his knees drawn up under his chin and his arms around his legs. Silently he watched the fire, and suddenly he said with great emphasis:

"I really don't care if I ever see any of my friends or relatives any more."

I was shocked by the deep sincerity in his voice. Gótzsche and I took it quite seriously, it made a deep impression on us. Why did he talk like that, why did he call them friends if that was all they meant to him? Discarding them in one sentence, throwing them on the fire, just like that. If he had been anyone else, we would have taken it with a grain of salt, but we couldn't help taking him seriously. He felt it so strongly at the moment that he couldn't help saying it. We thought it strange. We couldn't forget it for some time and it made us a little reserved towards him. However, we soon learned not to take anything for granted or rely on him as far as his feelings were concerned. They were like the wind, blowing in all directions, sometimes like a hurricane, upon you without any warning, blown fiercer and fiercer by his burning emotions.

We began to wonder what friendship was, or what it meant to him. We had, of course, our own undefined ideas about friendship, largely included in the one word fidelity. Whether we could define it or not, we called our relation with him friendship. In spite of what he might say or do, we felt he was a true friend. Friendship with him was like any other real friendship and yet very different. Why shouldn't he say, some day, that he really didn't care whether he ever saw us any more or not? Yes, it wouldn't even surprise us if he would say the same about Frieda, his wife, and mean it for the moment in his own way, but not finally. So what could we expect? Nevertheless, we had a curious feeling of security about it. No matter what he might say or do, we had a strong belief, a conviction that nothing would alter or change our friendship. We had accepted him and he us—not only the best in each other, but altogether—with all our faults and trivialities—as one accepts one's own body. And we were trying to make the best of it. It was not something to be destroyed, but something to live and grow: to become part of one another and yet live apart, live one's own life within the unity.

He himself said about friendship: "All my life I have

wanted friendship with a man—real friendship, in my sense of what I mean by that word. What is this sense? Do I want friendliness? I should like to see anybody being ‘friendly’ with me. Intellectual equals? Or rather equals in being non-intellectual? I see your joke. Not something homosexual, surely? Indeed you have misunderstood me—besides this term is so imbedded in its own period. I do not belong to a world where that word has meaning. Comradeship perhaps? No, not that—too much love about it—no, not even in the Calamus sense, not comradeship—not manly love. Then what Nietzsche describes—the friend in whom the world standeth complete, a capsule of the good—the creating friend, who hath always a complete world to bestow? Well, in a way. That means in my words, choose as your friend the man who has centre.”

Or as he said in “Pansies”:

“I would like a few men to be at peace with.
Not friends necessarily, they talk so much.
Nor yet comrades, for I don’t belong to any cause.
Nor yet ‘brothers,’ it’s so conceited.
Nor pals, they’re a nuisance.
But men to be at peace with.”

Gótzsche and I often discussed our relation to Lawrence, he who didn’t want friends, comrades, brothers or pals, but men to be at peace with. We never solved to our own satisfaction why he had chosen us as companions. We did not possess the brilliance of his mind nor the abundance of his knowledge; we had only horse sense, and knew people and the world by experience. But then, these qualities he also did not esteem as real values in life; nor the fact that we were fellow artists. We did not play up to him, and were not afraid of voicing our opinions, whether they were contrary to his or not. We did not hesitate to side with Frieda, either, when we thought him wrong. We had many emotional fights and heated discussions, too. Only the fact remained that we were there, whatever the capacity and no matter what he chose to call it. We always ended with the same conclusion—we have never had a truer friend.

We regarded our friendship as something absolute, although we never spoke of it or asked for it in words. One doesn't do that in a real friendship, at least that would be unthinkable to me. Friendship is something that doesn't have to be insured with words, nor is trust. They either are, or they aren't. This reminds me of one of the artists in Taos who prided himself on being a friend of Lawrence's. In relating this incident, I will mostly quote Lawrence, since he has described such an incident.

We were all present at this artist's house, and in the midst of some discussion, the artist faced Lawrence, gripped his biceps and said: "You're a stranger here. You're from the old country. You're different from us, but you are a man we can trust. I'm sure I can trust you!"

"With what?" asked Lawrence.

"Why, why everything!" he blurted out. "Every blessed thing. I can trust you with everything. Isn't that right?"

Lawrence looked into this other man's dilated, glowing eyes. "But I don't know what it means—'Everything!'—It means so much that it means nothing."

"Oh yes, it does mean something," he reiterated.

"Besides," said Lawrence, "why should you trust me with anything, let alone everything? You've no occasion to trust me at all—except as one neighbour trusts another in common honour."

"It's more than common honour. It's most uncommon honour. Look here," he said, "supposing I came to you, to ask you things, and tell you things? You'd answer me as man to man, wouldn't you? With common honour? You'd treat everything I would say with common honour, as between man and man."

"Why yes, I hope so."

"I know you would. But for the sake of saying it, say it. Tell me now, can I trust you?"

Lawrence watched him. The man was in earnest, so he said simply, "Yes."

A light leaped into the other man's eyes. "That means you trust me, of course," he said.

"Yes," replied Lawrence.

The other man pulled Lawrence to his chest and hugged his shoulders. Then he let go and caught Lawrence's hand, shaking it, saying: "This is fate, we will keep it up!"

Lawrence tolerated with difficulty the other man's facetious familiarity and heartiness.

To me, such an incident would be a barrier. There had to be reasons why a relationship developed between us. And there were. We had many things in common. Our background had been more or less the same. We had served apprenticeships as workers and lived among the working-classes. We had had academic training, and then as artists had had access to the highest classes of society. Then, too, we had travelled far and wide. We had responded to all this in the same manner and our likes and dislikes were largely the same. We were furthermore of the same Nordic, blue-eyed race. I mention this because he once said he felt related to us in the blood.

"Perhaps you are," one of us responded. "You *could* be a descendant of the old Vikings."

"I could," he said, "but I don't feel the relation that distant. Who knows, perhaps I am the offspring of some seafaring Dane who settled in England. Not so far back, either. Perhaps that is also the explanation for my great wanderlust."

And he continued: "We are, most of us who use the English language, water people, sea derived. Like those terrible yellow-bearded Vikings who break out of the waves in beaked ships. The sea-born people, who can meet and mingle no longer: who turn away from life to the abstract, to the elements: the corrosive vast sea."

And about the blue-eyed people: "There is something curious about real blue-eyed people. They are never quite human, in the good classic sense, human as brown-eyed people are human: the human of the living humus. About a real blue-eyed person there is usually something abstract, elemental. Brown-eyed people are, as it were, like the earth, which is tissue of bygone life, organic, compound. In blue eyes there is sun and rain and abstract, uncreate element, water, ice, air, space, but not humanity.

"The blood of all men is ocean-born. We have our material universality, our blood-oneness, in the sea, the salt water."

This and many other things largely predetermined our feeling of at-homeness when we were together, although it could not be the whole reason.

We were not blind to the convenience it was for him to have us around. We could do the work that was too heavy for him. We could make the long strenuous ride on horseback to Taos to do necessary shopping or to register mail. Last but not least, we had the motor car to take him or all of us whenever and wherever he wanted to go, weather permitting. He could also, like King Saul, send for David, the Danes, to be entertained when he felt the need of it. Did we then but play the rôle of a sort of an aide-de-camp? Were we but mere companions? Or less still, just servants or errand boys, as some people in Taos preferred to call us? Of course not. If we did something for him, he did his share fully in return. But nasty tongues must have their say, and apparently there were some nasty tongues in Taos. Jealous tongues. They were too jealous even to conceive of the possibility of others possessing values or virtues which they themselves did not practise or possess. They of course considered it impossible for us even to be just an approximation of themselves. Preposterous to think that we could fill the place they themselves so vainly desired! Puh—those Danes—just a couple of vagabonds. Handy men to Lawrence, errand boys, etc. So they talked.

But we said to ourselves: Lawrence does not need us as servants. He can have a Mexican from the village below once or twice a week to do the heavy work for him at a very nominal fee. He does not need us as transfer men or errand boys. The rancher has a car, too; he can fill that rôle. He does not need us for company, he can at any time have all the company he might want from Taos, or even from Santa Fé, yes even from New York and the whole United States. Many are willing, but they do not seem to be wanted.

It is obvious that all this was not the reason for our

being there. And hadn't he often said in discussions, "I don't want servants around, they poison the air?"

Then there were those who predicted that we wouldn't get along, and that the Danes would soon be kicked out, as Lawrence was too temperamental to have anybody around any length of time.

Well, in any case, we were there, we were getting along fine. We didn't care what they said or what it all was. What did it matter what even Lawrence called it? We were content. We knew that despite casual outward disturbances, there was always among us an invisible inside current of understanding and peace. The "flow between" or "centre of polarity" of which he so often spoke, was never broken. We knew he wanted us "to be at peace with."

One afternoon Lawrence told us that his publisher, Thomas Seltzer, and his wife would be coming out to visit him, so we had better get started on our different commissions. I was to make designs for his books, jackets for "Kangaroo," "The Captain's Doll," "Studies in Classic American Literature," and "Birds, Beasts and Flowers." Also to make vignettes and illustrate the latter.

He came down the next morning right after breakfast. He not only came to give me particulars about the contents of the books and the motifs he would like me to use, but also to pose for the portrait Gótzsche was to paint of him. From then on and until after Christmas, he came in the morning and stayed all day, going home only for lunch and coming right back. Occasionally he stayed for lunch at our place, but oftener we went home with him. We had such a lot to talk about and discuss. Frieda, too, was interested. She frequently visited us in the afternoon to see what we were doing. Lawrence always seemed to be in a happy mood and in high spirits. We had such fun together making the designs, it was almost play. Sometimes when I thought Lawrence went too far in his playfulness about the motifs in the design, I would put my foot down. I was very serious about my work, too serious at times, Lawrence thought.

"We can't always be serious," he said. "One must also have some fun."

I first made the jacket for the "Captain's Doll," and Lawrence liked it quite well right away. The next was "Kangaroo" and we had some differences about it. I was satisfied with it, I thought my design very good, better than the "Doll," but Lawrence was not happy with it, he thought it too abstract. And to make clear what he wanted, he made a drawing of a kangaroo himself. When he first started to make drawings in our presence, he was a little shy and apologetic about it, but it didn't take long before he felt free. He liked to draw and became very intense and absorbed when he did it. We joked and laughed at his funny kangaroo, but he didn't mind. I made another design more to his liking, but it was not as good as the first one.

While I was drawing it, Lawrence watched me, and then he said joyfully, "Oh, we must put a man in her belly."

And so I put a little man in the pouch of the "Roo." Lawrence was very happy about the idea, but I wasn't. We didn't agree, so we left the decision up to the publisher, who was due to arrive at Christmas.

Then we set out to do "Studies in Classic American Literature," and did we have fun! Lawrence just loved to draw, he was like a child about it. He made the first design to show me what he wanted, and as he drew the many different figures, he talked about them and to them. He had quite a talk with Walt Whitman about his "Leaves of Grass." Lawrence wanted the design to be a conglomeration of things bursting in all directions, with some sort of a centrum. Each figure had its symbolic meaning and the design was a story in itself. Too bad I can't remember it, not even why the leaves in "Leaves of Grass" are loose and seen leaving the book. (But perhaps the clever reader can figure it all out and reconstruct the story for himself.) As he talked he said, "All things are relative, and have their sacredness in their true relation to all other things."

"Everything," he said to himself, "is one of those endless conversations with myself which are my chief delight. Everything is relative!"

Looking at my design again now, I remember that the capital letter "A" appearing several times stands for Alpha, Adam, Adama, Adultery, Adulteress, Admirable, America, Americans, etc. Cooper's Leatherstocking Novels furnish the log cabin and Indians. Poe's "The Cask of Amantillado" is there, Hawthorne's "The Scarlet Letter," of which he said, "It is, perhaps, the most colossal satire ever penned;" also Hawthorne's "The House of the Seven Gables," Dana's "Two Years Before the Mast." "Moby Dick" is sniffing at a palm behind Benjamin Franklin, and Walt Whitman, below, is cut in two.

Lawrence had some correspondence with Seltzer about our design and Seltzer wrote that he would not go to the expense of having "Birds, Beasts and Flowers" illustrated, and perhaps not even have a jacket for it. So these drawings never passed the preliminary state, but we had made a complete set.

Lawrence was angry about it, at first, like a boy who has had his toy taken away from him. And he said, "I will *make* him take it!"

I agreed, saying, "He ought to. Why shouldn't people be allowed to enjoy my designs, just because a publisher doesn't understand them?" And then again, I didn't want to have my work forced upon anybody.

On due reflection we accepted it as "one of those things," and agreed that a publisher was justified in not spending his money if he didn't think it right; but we felt it would add to the volume and therefore considered it foolish of him not to spend a few shekels.

"Oh, these publishers," Lawrence said. "They are impossible. They even have the impudence to cut words out of my writings."

He said he hated to pose for his picture, he found it silly and so on, but he did it good-naturedly anyhow. Götzsche didn't have much trouble with him though it wasn't finished without some criticism, of course. But he accepted it

readily after Frieda had given her okay on it. She thought it very good.

It was a hard, cold winter with many snowstorms that kept us indoors for days at a time, except for errands between our cabins, the fetching of water and the walk to the mail box. But between storms the weather was glorious. The air was so clear and pure, and the sun shone bright and warm. The forest and the gorgeous panorama of the desert below were simply indescribably beautiful.

On such days, we would hike in the mountains toward Lobo peak, it looked so near, only about an hour's hike away. But it was so very deceptive in the clear high altitude. We never reached its peak on any of our excursions. Perhaps Gótzsche and I could have made it alone, but we never went without Lawrence, and he did not have the stamina to sustain the strenuous hike in the deep snow. He had to rest up too many times. Not that he openly gave in and admitted he was tired; oh, no, he just wanted to pause and sit still on a rock or on the trunk of a fallen tree to feel Nature, watch birds and animals, feel the warmth of the sun and enjoy the grandeur of the view down below.

But perhaps, on the contrary, he would say, "Look!—Look how hopelessly empty it all is in its vastness of death." And of course he would also say we were "not to rush" as we did, that we were a couple of "mere snow-ploughing machines, we were spoiled by the machine age and had become machines ourselves."

We reminded him that we were not just out for a walk but were trying to reach Lobo peak, and had to keep going in order to get there and be back before sundown. Furthermore, we enjoyed moving on, feeling the strength of our muscles, keyed up by perspiration. Our warm bodies steamed in the cold air. We enjoyed the deep forceful breathing, bringing the cold pure air into the innermost corners of our lungs, giving us new vitality.

We didn't rest long, we had set out for the unknown and the unknown was fascinating. So, unmercifully, we went on again at the same pace as before and Lawrence followed

behind. I remember we thought it was fine for him to get some real exercise. "That will build him up, it will only do him good," we said. And so we went on, determined to conquer. Gótzsche was leading, he was a good hiker. I followed him closely, but Lawrence lagged farther and farther behind. In our eagerness to get to the top, we had not noticed that we had lost Lawrence. We knew he was behind and halted to give him a chance to catch up, but discovered he was away down on the slope. He had stopped. He was sitting on a tree trunk. It struck me how small he looked, a mere speck in an immense sheet of white, and so alone in the vast wilderness of rugged mountains and endless sky above.

We "yoo-hooed" to him to get his attention. He rose to his feet and shouted something back, but we couldn't get the words. In return we cried out to him to get a move on. But he waved at us with his arms to come to him. For a moment we didn't know if we should continue up or go down and join him. We hated to go back, but then we wouldn't think of leaving him alone. Perhaps there was something wrong, too. If he couldn't keep on, we would have to abandon our goal and return.

When we reached him, we found he was very tired, but he only half admitted it, saying, "I guess the altitude has got me." He had done his best to follow us, even to the point of exhaustion. He was very brave. We felt sorry for him despite our disappointment, but didn't say anything. We didn't talk much, but the tired look in his eyes told us we had better be going home. In silent agreement, we started on the decline.

Coming up, we had been walking on the south of the slopes where the snow was only ankle or knee deep. It was tiring even going down, so I suggested we try the north side. Perhaps the frozen crust of the snow would bear us up. I tried but didn't get far before I fell into a pit, hanging suspended on my outstretched arms in the seemingly bottomless snow. I got out easily enough, but it taught us where to walk. On the north and north-west sides of the slopes, the snow collected undisturbed all winter, which accounted

for its depths. On the other sides it never became so deep, as the sun would continually melt it down.

After an all-day trip, we would always eat supper at Lawrence's and Frieda would have the meal ready for us when we got home. This evening on our arrival she said, "Lorenzo, you look so tired! You mustn't strain yourself like that, I am afraid you can't stand it."

He replied, half annoyed, "Oh, Frieda, why must you always tell me things like that. I'm all right."

And one of us said, "Women shouldn't treat men like babies. It's all right to be tired, it's good for one."

"Perhaps," she replied, "when one is strong, but Lorenzo is not strong, and if he can't look out for himself, somebody else must do it. And you two should see to it that he doesn't get so tired when you are out together. He can't stand it, I tell you. I know best!"

When I think of it now, knowing he had a weak chest, our behaviour does seem a bit cruel, but we didn't know it then. He did, however, have a cold two or three times that winter, but if we came to his house and found him in bed, he would say hastily, as if excusing himself for being there, "I feel I have a cold coming on, and as it is better to prevent than to cure, I shall stay in bed. I'll be quite all right in a day or two, I'm sure of that."

And so he was, and therefore we didn't pay much attention. That was just his way. We had colds, too, only we didn't go to bed about it.

I remember one day when I had a cold, he came down to our cabin. He had some branches from a sagebrush in his hand. He took a pot of water and put it on the fire. He broke the sage into bits and put it in the pot, stems, leaves and all. While it was coming to a boil, he told me he was making sage tea for my cold.

"You see," he said, "during the war, when they had the great influenza epidemic in America, they also had it out here. The Whites and Mexicans died like flies, but the Indians survived because they drank sage tea. So they say. I have tried it myself. It keeps your bowels moving and cleans your blood, you see."

After the water had boiled for some time and extracted the juice from the sage, he poured the strong-smelling, yellow-olive-green fluid into a cup and said, "Now here is your sage tea. Drink it as hot as you can."

I lifted my cup, but when the strong-smelling steam got under my nose, I put my cup down and said, "Nothing doing."

"You must try, really you must," he pleaded.

I forced myself to take a sip, but I could not swallow it. I ran to the door and spat it out. "How awful," I said, "it's like poison. That's enough for me."

"Now look here," he said, "I will take a cup, too, for company's sake. Perhaps that will help you to get it down."

"I don't want to," I said. "Both the odour and the taste are vile and go against me inside and turn my stomach." And, using one of his own pet phrases against him, I said, "One shouldn't let the will bully one's feelings, you know."

He just smiled at me and said, "You must take it as hot as you can." He then sipped his own tea down as fast as its heat would permit it, and he did it without a grimace on his face.

With a lot of fuss and complaint, I got mine down, too, but it took me plenty of time to do it. When he left, he told me to make some fresh tea before retiring at night and take it in bed.—That afternoon I had my first and also my last cup of sage tea.

We had heard somebody say that Lawrence was a sick man, but people say so many things, and we merely let it pass over our heads. We knew he wasn't so very strong, but he didn't particularly strike us as a sick person. He was often gay and lively, quick and alert, a good walker and had plenty of endurance on horseback. And despite his tall, slender body, he didn't impress one as being weak; on the contrary, he had a strange vitality of his own. And when Frieda told him to remember that he wasn't too strong, and not to strain himself bodily, he was annoyed

and could even be a bit angry about it too. We could understand that very well. A man doesn't want to be weak, he wants to be strong and to be brave, even if it is a bit foolish sometimes. And he was a man, a real man in every respect.

Someone, a woman I believe, has given the impression that he didn't care much for men, and for manly men not at all. I cannot agree, unless by manly is meant vulgar. But then vulgarity is by no means restricted to men alone. Lawrence certainly did not care for vulgar people, be they men or women. It is true that he admired the women of today in many respects, and had many women admirers in return. Many times I have heard him say that the women of today have more courage than the men. But he has also said, "Women must submit to the positive power-soul in man, for their being."

One cannot say he didn't care for men without saying he didn't care for mankind. But he did care, he cared for all mankind—perhaps too deeply, too much. To say what he cared for, or to quote him in bits or to define him in a sentence, is next to impossible. He was so paradoxical in his complexity, and yet he was also faithfulness and simplicity itself. So when it is said that he didn't care for men, one must answer—that has perhaps been made the general belief. It is true he cared tremendously for his mother, and also for his wife, but apart from them, it may be presumed, if he made any difference at all, that he cared mostly for men, since the majority of his friends were men, and that he cared for his manly friends.

To say that he didn't care for manly men throws a suspicion on him, too. Some have come to believe he was a man in body only, with a woman's mentality, likes and dislikes—a sissy. I also had people ask me if he was a hermaphrodite, and others if he was homosexual. Wouldn't it be swell if it were so? What a tale I would have to tell. When I was asked these questions, I always inquired where they got such ideas. Some would say that it was what they got out of his writings, and others had heard it from somebody and accepted it as actual fact. When I denied these

accusations, some would sigh in relief and say, "I am so glad to hear it isn't true." Others were seemingly disappointed and still others didn't believe me at all and threw their suspicion on me, too. But I didn't care, I always answered frankly without embarrassment. But my feelings were many and mixed. I felt sorry, angry, contemptuous, pitying and indulgent. And I have answered in as many ways, and also said it was none of their damn business. What business have people got putting their noses in his private affairs? Only the artist belongs to the world, the man belongs to himself.

Of course he cared for manliness, and he was himself as manly as any other real man, sound in body and in mind. But he was more than just a man. He was an artist, and it has been said that in all great artists extremes meet. He was a complex of all mankind, he was everything, as I have said before, everything in the human spectrum. And that is, I believe, what made him as great a man as he was. When he spoke of his beloved idea of starting a new life and forming a colony, he never included women. He always conceived of realizing it with men alone, in the beginning at least. At the ranch he always concluded by limiting the group to himself, Frieda and the Danes. A christ with his woman—and men disciples. Only at times he added, "I suppose eventually the men shall want to take women unto themselves!"

Horace Gregory has said, in "Pilgrim of the Apocalypse" (page 53), that in "Son of Woman" Murry tried "to prove Lawrence's hatred of woman and to hint broadly that he was spiritually undermined by homosexual tendencies. There is no use blinking the fact that Lawrence included the possibility of homosexuality in the scheme of modern existence, that he offered it as a tentative relief for an antagonism between the sexes, a symptom of a disease that had spread over Europe, but to read into this momentary relief a final solution of the problem is to read Lawrence narrowly and thus distort the larger aspects of his diagnosis of a sickness that he felt was engulfing the world. On these grounds, one may as well damn Thomas Mann for

his 'Death in Venice' or James Joyce for the brothel scene in 'Ulysses.'"

The absurdity of all these accusations was clear to us. It is amazing what people will think and even say. All the utterly false stories told about him could in themselves fill a volume but are best forgotten. From the very beginning, we didn't believe what was said, and we soon learned to know it was untrue and false!

We did not of course always chase mountain peaks when we went out. Mostly we simply went for a walk, drifting around in the forest on the mountain slopes, enjoying ourself and Nature. Strangely enough, Lawrence generally revolted against the scenery. I cannot recall one single instance where he heartily commended the beauty and grandeur of the landscape. On the contrary, he was very much against it as a whole. "It is so heavy and empty, it sort of hangs over one. It is very depressing," he would say.

On the other hand, he was nearly always enthusiastic about Nature, that is, in bits, if I may so describe it. He would praise the pureness of the air, the clearness of the sky, the formation of the clouds, the gorgeous sunsets, or notice the beauty of a single tree, silhouetted against the sky, a blanket of snow, the depth of the forest, and so on. And last but not least, the wild animal life had his warm and even excited interest. When we went out in the morning, after a snowfall the night before, we would come upon many and varied animal footprints in the soft snow. It amused us to determine the different tracks and trace them to their origin. There was something fascinating about following these footprints. We felt a certain communication between us and the animal kingdom. In the new snow we found the signatures, as we called the tracks, of rabbit, cottontail, squirrel, coyote, deer, bobcat and lion, and of birds too numerous to mention. Even turkey prints galore.

On our many walks we met nearly all of them in person, even the lion himself. But alas, he had to be dead to be

approached. I will here let Lawrence tell you in the poem he wrote after the incident:

"Climbing through the January snow, into the Lobo canyon
Dark grow the spruce trees, blue is the balsam, water sounds
still unfrozen, and the trail is still evident.

Men!

Two men!

Men! The only animal in the world to fear!

They hesitate.

We hesitate.

They have a gun.

We have no gun.

Then we all advance, to meet.

Two Mexicans, strangers, emerging out of the dark and snow
and inwardness of the Lobo valley.

What are they doing here on this vanishing trail?

What is he carrying?

Something yellow.

A deer?

Que tiene, amigo?—

Leon.

He smiles, foolishly, as if he were caught doing wrong.

And we smile, foolishly, as if we didn't know.

He is quite gentle and dark-faced.

It is a mountain lion,

A long, slim cat, yellow like a lioness.

Dead.

He trapped her this morning, he says, smiling foolishly.

Lift up her face,

Her round, bright face, bright as frost.

Her round, fine-fashioned head, with two dead ears:

And stripes on the brilliant frost of her face, sharp, fine
dark rays,

Dark, keen, fine rays in the brilliant frost of her face.

Beautiful dead eyes.

Hermoso es!

They go out towards the open;

We go on into the gloom of Lobo.

And above the trees I found her lair,
A hole in the blood-orange brilliant rocks that stick up,
a little cave.

And bones, and twigs, and perilous ascent.
So, she will never leap up that way again, with the yellow
flash of a mountain lion's long shoot!
And her bright striped frost-face will never watch any more,
out of the shadow of the cave in the blood-orange rock,
Above the trees of the Lobo dark valley-mouth!

Instead, I look out.
And out to the dim of the desert, like a dream, never
real;

To the snow of the Sangre de Cristo mountains, the ice of
the mountains of Picoris,
And near across at the opposite steep of snow, green trees
motionless standing in snow, like a Christmas toy.

And I think in this empty world there was room for me and
a mountain lion.

And I think in the world beyond, how easily we might spare
a million or two of humans

And never miss them.

Yet what a gap in the world, the missing white-frost face of
that slim yellow mountain lion!"

And so Lawrence talked of and to the animals as old acquaintances to us and himself as we went along. If I could only remember exactly what he said, but I can't, not exactly. It may seem of no importance and some may only say how cute, but it was more than that. Lawrence didn't just open his mouth to hear himself talk. There was thought behind his animal chatter, and it revealed that particular gift in him to use the animal for inspiration to interpret his own mood, human behaviour and relationships.

The blue jay was our most constant companion. He seemed to follow us wherever we went. He was a noisy fellow who did his best to attract our attention and he generally succeeded.

"Yes, I have heard you," Lawrence would say, "and I know you quite well from around the house. You are *gossip*, flying, blustering gossip itself. You must follow us wherever we go. Don't I know!"

And then he would carry on a conversation with Gossip

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Bluejay and we would join him in the chatter, spur him on, entering into competition, making him fiercer and fiercer or funnier and funnier and we would all break out in a good laugh.

Bibbles, Lawrence's French bulldog pup, of which I will talk later, was nearly always along. She would always chase the Flying Gossip, but never succeed, and always come back to us and look at us with such telling eyes. But I will let Lawrence tell you from his "Blue Jay":

"The blue jay with a crest on his head
Comes round the cabin in the snow.
He runs in the snow like a bit of blue metal
Turning his back on everything.

From the pine-tree that towers like a pillar of shaggy smoke
Immense above the cabin
Comes a strident laugh as we approach, this little black
dog and I;
So halts the little black bitch on four spread paws in
the snow
And looks up inquiringly into the pillar of cloud,
With a tinge of misgiving.
Ca-a-a! comes the scrape of ridicule out of the tree.

What voice of the Lord is that, from the tree of smoke?

Oh, Bibbles, little black bitch in the snow,
With a pinch of snow in the groove of your silly snub nose,
What do you look at *me* for?
What do you look at me for, with such misgiving?
It's the blue jay laughing at us.
It's the blue jay jeering at us, Bibs.

Every day since the snow is here
The blue jay paces round the cabin, very busy, picking
up bits,
Turning his back on us all,
And bobbing his thick dark crest about the snow, as if
darkly saying

I ignore those folk who look out.

You acid-blue metallic bird,
You thick bird with a strong crest,
Who are you?
Whose boss are you, with all your bully way?
You copper-sulphate blue bird!"

One of us would perhaps repeat, "I ignore those folk who look out." Indeed, Lawrence would answer, the outside world has nothing to offer, one must look in, inside oneself! And we would continue in this channel until perhaps interrupted by a quick-flying spurt across our path, the little whimsical cottontail bringing a new thought, changing the topic, only to yield perhaps, to a mere spot in the sky, the soaring eagle himself. And so we would go on, Birds, Beasts and Trees having a significance in addition to being themselves—symbols or what not. But also being Lawrence and he them.

When we halted or rested on our walks, we would automatically turn towards the sun, towards the south-west. And being up so high on the steep mountain-side, we would from almost every point have a view of the great panorama—the dark, tree-covered slopes, the immensity of the desert below and the vastness of the beyond.

We would rest for moments in silence, or in awe, or perhaps disappear in the feeling of just being alive, just standing like a tree in the white snow and let the sun's rays tickle through our limbs. Or perhaps our eyes would follow the flight of the birds in spacious space. Or perhaps rest on the tiny dark spot in the sun, the would-be king of the birds, the American Eagle, Eagle in New Mexico.

Were we looking out? Yes and no, mostly yes, I am afraid. But he did not ignore us, he who said, "I ignore those folk who look out." For he said, as in "The American Eagle":

"The new full-fledged Republic

Chained to the perch of prosperity.

Overweening bird, full of screams of life, commanding a
lucrative obedience.

Eagle of the Rockies, bird of men that are greedy,

Flapping your wings from your perch and commanding the
greedy millions

Burrowing below you.

Opening great wings in the face of the sheep-faced ewe of
the world

Who is losing her lamb;

Drinking a little blood, then spitting it out, young eagle,
in distaste;

What bird are you, in the end?

What are you, American Eagle?
Will you feed forever on the cold meat of prosperity?"

Or as in "Eagle In New Mexico":

"Towards the sun, towards the south-west
A scorched breast.
A scorched breast, breasting the sun like an answer,
Like a retort

Does the sun need steam of blood, do you think
In America, still,
Old eagle?

Does the sun in New Mexico sail like a fiery bird of prey in
the sky
Hovering?
Does he shriek for blood?
Does he fan great wings above the prairie, like a hovering,
blood-thirsty bird?

And are you his priest, big eagle
Whom the Indians aspire to?
Is there a bond of bloodshed between you?

Is your continent cold from the ice-age still, that the sun
is so angry?
Is the blood of your continent somewhat reptilian still,
That the sun should be greedy for it?

I don't yield to you, big, jowl-faced eagle.
Nor you nor your blood-thirsty sun
That sucks up blood
Leaving a nervous people.

Fly off, big bird with a big black back,
Fly slowly away, with a rush of fire in your tail,
Dark as you are on your dark side, eagle of heaven.

Even the sun in heaven can be curbed and chastened at last
By the life in the hearts of men.
And you, great bird, sun-starer, your heavy black beak
Can be put out of office as sacrifice bringer.

This is a bit of looking in, into the heart of a man, whose
inside could be like an inferno, whose heat would rival the
sun. "Even the sun in heaven can be curbed and chastened
by the life in the hearts of men." That is what he said, but
we did not contradict him. We did not fully understand, we

did not fully understand how to look in, neither could we fully understand when we looked out, out to the outside world, out over the vastness of creation.

To us it was splendour, magnificent, never surpassed. To Lawrence it was cold still from the ice age. Seldom did he give in, only in certain moments did he look out and bow in silence to the panorama, quietly admitting, admitting its splendour. But not for long. Soon he would burst out in violence against it. Innumerable are the times he said:

"But it is without a soul, it has no spirit. It is cold and empty, a landscape of the moon. It has no soul, America has no soul. And," he added, "it will never have one. It is dead." Time and again did he say, "I feel I should die if I had to live here. The whole country, the mountains, the air, it is so hopelessly empty. Even the birds don't sing, it is all dead! It needs to be reborn, to be lived in."

"But the Indians," we interrupted.

"The Indians, too, are dead," he said. "The whole atmosphere stinks of dead bones. I feel I should never, never write another line if I should live here. I feel I, too, should die. There is too much menace in the landscape!"

He said it had no spirit, but he also said, "Every continent has its own great spirit of place. Every people is polarized in some particular locality, which is home, the homeland. Different places on the face of the earth have different vital effluence, different vibration, different chemical exhalation, different polarity with different stars: call it what you like. But the spirit of place is a great reality."

"When you are actually *in* America, America hurts, because it has a powerful disintegrating influence upon the White psyche. It is full of grinning, unappeased aboriginal demons, too, ghosts, and it persecutes the White men like some Eumenides, until the White men give up their absolute whiteness. America is tense with latent violence and resistance."

Also: "When one comes to America, one finds that there is always a certain slightly devilish resistance in the American landscape, and a certain slightly bitter resistance in the White man's heart."

"The American landscape has never been at one with the White man. Never. And White men have probably never felt so bitter anywhere, as here in America, where the very landscape in its very beauty seems a bit devilish and grinning, opposed to us."

"As for your Indian," he continued, "the Red man died hating the White man. What remnant of him lives, lives hating the White man. Go near the Indians, and you just feel it. As far as we are concerned, the Red man is subtly and unremittingly diabolic. Even when he doesn't know it. He is dispossessed in life, and unforgiving. He doesn't believe in us and our civilization, and so is our mystic enemy, for we push him off the face of the earth.

"Belief is a mysterious thing. It is the only healer of the soul's wounds. There is no belief in the world.

"The Red man is dead, disbelieving in us. He is dead and unappeased. Do not imagine him happy in his Happy Hunting Ground. No. Only those that die in belief die happy. Those that are pushed out of life in chagrin come back unappeased, for revenge.

"Not that the Red Indian will ever possess the broad lands of America. At least I presume not. But his ghost will.

"There is a shadow of violence and dark cruelty flickering in the air. It is the aboriginal demon hovering over the core of the continent. It hovers still, and the dread is still here.

"When you are actually in America, America hurts. And White men have probably never felt so bitter anywhere as here, where the very landscape in its very beauty seems a bit devilish and grinning, opposed to us."

That is how he spoke, standing there in the clearance of the forest, where the slopes of the mountain-side gave way to the panorama of desert and wastelands beyond. Three, blue-eyed, bearded men standing together in the snow, surrounded by a landscape in the colours of white, dark green, blue, brown and sunshine and frost in the shade.

Lawrence did not speak any more, but his thoughts continued, ubiquitous. We could see he suffered. He suffered tremendously by just being alive to the world. He suffered with and for all of us. Three men together

in a group, yet isolated in the stillness of thought. Isolated were we from the one who suffered, although we suffered too. How could we escape it, we were in the same nest with him, the nest of Phoenix.

We knew he had spoken the truth of his momentary feelings, and his feelings were often like that. It hurt us to hear him, with a sigh from his innermost depth, oh so hopelessly, say, "Don't you see it is absolutely dead?"

His breath froze white in the air as he spoke. We shivered and felt the breath of death.

But as the bird Phoenix was consumed by fire in the Arabian desert only to rise again from its own ashes, so it arose here to a new life, fresh and beautiful, in the desert of New Mexico. However depressed by death, we could nearly always bring him back to life. He was in love with life, real life. Perhaps we might just say, "Look at the snow on the branches. When the sun shines on it, it glitters like diamonds." Or, "Look at the blue jay, he says it with colours and vitality." Or, "Look at the squirrel. How quickly he jumps from branch to branch!"

Lawrence was just as quick to change his trend of thoughts or frame of mind. Quickly he jumped from death to life. He enjoyed the place and the living in it. And despite his feelings about never writing another line, he wrote anyhow.

On our way back to the cabin, he would be gay, we would chat and laugh. And as we got nearer home, he would wonder what Frieda would have for lunch for us. And he would start to memorize the contents of the pantry.

As Christmas was drawing nearer, we began to talk about the Indian dance at the pueblo. Mabel wanted Lawrence to come and see the Christmas dance there, but he couldn't quite make up his mind about it, and there was much talk back and forth about whether to go or not. Lawrence would rather not go, he said, and he tried to dissuade us from going too.

"It is such a farce, just a show of make-believe. It is utterly false," and so on.

But Gótzsche and I were determined to go, whether he

went or not, and Frieda wanted to go too, so we would not give up our intentions. We used his own phrases against him. "It is a writer's business to know, you know. Even if it is false, he must know."

Then we also reminded him that his publisher, Thomas Seltzer, and Mrs. Seltzer were due about Christmas, as was his agent, Mountsier, all of whom were to visit the ranch for a week or so. And by making one trip he could kill two birds with one stone, see the dance and fetch his guests. And so, little by little, with Frieda's help, we finally won him over.

He wrote the following letter to Mabel:¹

"DEL MONTE RANCH,
VALDEZ, NEW MEX.,
Sunday.

DEAR MABEL—Thank you for the honey, which came from you or via you, I don't know. Also Frieda's shoes from Santa Fé fit.

I don't know now if you are home or not. We are settled in—very nice—Danes in their cabin. Today we rode all four to the hot springs—Manby's—did me good to soak. I rode Elizabeth's horse—nice horse to ride.

Seltzer says he and his wife leave New York on the 22nd of December and come straight to Taos. His wife has a fortnight's leave: from what I don't know. I said I would meet them in Taos: and see the Christmas dance at the pueblo. I want you to let me know at once if you wish us to come to you for a day or two, or not. Of course you may be full up—or you may be going away. Then I would just stay a night with the Seltzers in Taos and come on here. Tell me, so I can arrange.

Why don't you come over here and see us? Or if you don't want to come here—don't you?—then we'll meet you at John's Ranch and picnic there.

Life has been just a business of chopping wood, fixing doors, putting up shelves, eating and sleeping, since we are here. There is still much more to do, but it can wait.

No news from the outer world. Let me have bill for the honey and shoes. If we come to you for Christmas, I'll bring mince pies. I made some mince meat. And

¹ Letters to Mabel, quoted from *Lorenzo in Taos*, Knopf.

I want to make Christmas puddings. But now I have to bake! Great success, Graham's bread.

Pup growing huger.—*Saluti Buoni*, D. H. L."

In the next mail there was a letter from Mabel, and a letter from Mrs. Harwood. These letters infuriated Lawrence. He read them aloud to us and then passed them on so we could see for ourselves.

Mabel answered with regret that she could not have us for Christmas as she was having her family only, and hoped he would understand. But she had arranged with Mrs. Harwood to take us all in, and that she would love to have us.

The letter from Mrs. Harwood was an invitation for *all* of us to stay with her during the holidays.

Mabel hoped that Lawrence would surely understand. He did. He was of course not fooled by the surface, the phrases of the letter. He understood only too well; he saw clearly what was underneath.

He was mad, raving mad, and he hated Mabel, hated her as only he could hate. He cursed her, cursed her violently, and when he had composed himself, he sat down and analyzed her and told us what she was.

I think he was justified in his anger over her behaviour. Lawrence asked so little from anybody, and only when it was justified or he was encouraged to, as in this case, where he asked for room for a day or two for himself and his guests. From a person who had more than plenty of this earth's room and goods, in her Mabel-town, but whose heart-room was apparently crammed to capacity by an over-expanding ego, an ego that left no room for others.

After receiving the Mabel-Harwood letters, Lawrence changed his mind about going to Taos for Christmas. Both Frieda and we, the Danes, told him not to take things to heart, that Mabel wasn't worth his hatred nor even his disgust, and to forget her and her rotten world. We urged him to go with us in spite of everything to the dance, fetch his guests, come back home and be happy. But his mind was made up "for the moment" and he would not listen. He sat down and wrote the following letters:

"DEL MONTE RANCH, VALDEZ,
Tuesday.

DEAR MABEL—Your letter just came. I have decided not to come to Taos at all for Christmas. Mountsier remains indefinite, and the Seltzers are no more definite than they were. So I'll have them brought straight out here when they do come: and I must be here to receive them.

No, I don't feel convivial.

Hope you'll have a good time with your festivities.—
Yrs, D. H. LAWRENCE."

When he started his letter to Mrs. Harwood, he asked Gótzsche and me if we still wanted to go to Taos and what he should tell Mrs. Harwood. We told him we still intended to go to Taos, but we could not accept Mrs. Harwood's kind invitation alone. If he and Frieda were along, it would be different, but we knew her hardly at all, and as the whole invitation was just the result of scheming, we thought we were not genuinely wanted and preferred to refuse. We would rather rent a room with a Mexican family and be free by ourselves.

"All right," he said, "you do as you like." And he wrote this letter:

"DEL MONTE RANCH,
VALDEZ, NEW MEXICO,
Tuesday.

MY DEAR MRS. HARWOOD—Your letter has only just arrived. It was a shame to trouble you about all those other people. I have decided not to come to Taos at Christmas, these arrivals being so indefinite. When Mountsier and the Seltzers do come, I will have them brought straight out here. Your invitation was so very kind, it seems a shame not to accept it. But it will be much simpler as it is. I must look after the Seltzers as soon as they come. Will you please accept my thanks and my regrets?

The Danes, too, thank you very much, but will feel too shy to come to your house alone.

With all good wishes, D. H. LAWRENCE."

After breakfast, Sunday, December 24, Gótzsche and I went up to Lawrence's house to ask for the last time if he would change his mind and come along to Taos, and if so, we would take the Lizzie out and go in her together. We thought, despite the heavy snow, that the car would make the trip all right. Frieda thought it could be such fun, she would like to go, but she would not leave Lawrence alone, and he didn't want to go, so there, *basta*.

Well, we would go alone then, and decided to go on horseback. It was surer than the Lizzie. While we went to the corral to saddle up the horses, Lawrence made a list of things for our joint housekeeping and a few errands to do for him in Taos. When we rode up to the porch in front of the house, we were heavily equipped with saddlebags. We even had knapsacks on our own backs. There was much shopping to do now that we expected guests.

Lawrence admonished us to be very careful and to try not to stumble with the horses. He always showed such tender, genuine consideration for one, it felt so good. But we also felt cowboyish on our horses and started off at a good gallop, waving good-bye, glimpsing Lawrence's smile, that of a father enjoying his sons having clean fun. And like good sons we trotted our horses in an orderly manner before we were out of sight, so as not to give him cause for worry.

It was a glorious day to be out in. The sun shone brightly on the virgin snow as we trotted down the mountain slopes in the forest. How could we help but be happy, despite our wish to have Lawrence and Frieda with us? We talked about Lawrence and his anger towards Mabel, and his stubbornness in not wanting to go to the Indian dance, and in not giving in to Frieda's and our wishes. Perhaps he really didn't want to go, perhaps he had no genuine craving to experience the dance. But we felt sure that he was curious about it, and after all, the Christmas dance was a major happening in this part of the country. As a writer, it was his business to know, but still he did not yield. Only at our departure, we noticed that his stand was not as firm as before. Now that we had gone on alone and he was

left behind, perhaps Frieda and his own curiosity would win him over.

And when Gótzsche said to me, "I have a feeling that Lawrence somehow will come to the dance," it did not seem strange to me and I answered that it would not surprise me in the least to meet him there. Feeling my support, Gótzsche said, "I feel sure Lawrence will be there. I will bet you on it, too."

But I wouldn't take the bet, I thought it too risky. First, I had learned enough about Lawrence not to bank on his feelings. They might change any minute. Secondly, there were still two possibilities that he could get down to Taos. He could ask Hawk, the rancher, to take him down, or what was most likely to happen, someone would come up and get him. If someone would brave the hazards of the treacherous road to come and get him, he would not resist. I was reasonably sure of that, even if that someone should be inspired by Mabel. And that is what I felt likely to happen.

I was thinking of Nina Witt. Nina Witt, age unknown, a multi-million-dollar-society-belle from Buffalo, was a close friend of Mabel's. Through her she had met the Lawrences many times and was well acquainted with them.

We knew it was important in Mabel's programme to have Lawrence see the dance, and now that the Harwood scheme had failed, she might work Nina Witt. It was also possible that there was a certain silent rivalry going on between the two women, and that Nina Witt, now that Mabel had so utterly failed, would take it upon herself to bring the Lawrences to the dance and have them as guests, thereby showing Mabel that she could entertain them in her own right, independent of Mabel. Well, whatever the reason, we felt that Nina Witt was most likely to be the one who could turn the trick of bringing Lawrence to the dance.

As we rode into Taos in the early afternoon, we met some of our artist friends, who invited us for tea at their studio. So we put our horses in a stable and joined them until sundown, when we all went together to the pueblo.

I wrote at that time: "It was a fascinating evening.



Knud Merrild in Taos Indian Pueblo, New Mexico, 1923

As we arrived at the pueblo, the sun was just dipping behind the lofty table of the mesas, creating an orgy of colours on the drifting clouds in a sky of indigo. How beautiful the pueblo was in the dim light of the receding day! The colour-seething sky reflected and played in the rough and uneven walls of the adobe houses. Towering several stories high, they looked almost like pyramids, and their silhouette was so very fantastic against the flaming, moving sky above. It was like an orchestra playing in colours, all kinds of colours and harmonies. Colours never seen on a painter's palette and so beautiful they can never be described."

Many people had already come. Whites, Browns and Reds; many Americans, Mexicans and Indians from miles away had also come to see the dance. We were not in the least surprised to find that Lawrence was also there. He had even arrived before us. I do not remember who had brought him there or in whose company he was. But there he was, in the middle of the crowd. We did not work our way through the crowd towards him. But when he saw us, we greeted him from the distance. He smiled a little uneasily. Frieda waved happily to us and motioned us to join them. But we remained with our companions, who had arranged with an Indian friend for a place on the flat roof of one of the houses.

The dancers are coming out from the church where the procession starts. The archway at the entrance is heavily decorated with multi-coloured paper lanterns. The spectators are packed together like two solid walls, forming a lane, just leaving enough roadway for the dancers to pass. Now they are moving on, the dancers; they are painted red under the eyes, it means good luck. On the cheek of a child, I see a green circle. At the head of the procession come the torch-bearers, nine in all. They are bearing huge torches a foot thick and ten to fifteen feet long. A little distance behind come the shooters who, with shot-guns, shoot into the tops of the burning torches, so the sparks fly like golden rain and are sprinkled into the dark night. Now and then the torches are lowered to the ground,

describing illuminated curves, like comets in the dark sky, igniting the stacks of wood previously placed alongside the road into flaming bonfires. Amid rumbling shots, under the rain of flying sparks, between blazing bonfires, the dancers proceed. It is the children's dance—stepping, stepping forward, bodies moving up and down, up and down.

The music, or rather the accompaniment, is furnished by the elders, singing to the time-beating of the big drums: Tom, tom, tom—aya, aya, aya——

Behind the elders come young men carrying on their shoulders a barrow on which, on a throne, sits the holy Santa Maria, in plaster of Paris, vividly painted in bold colours and glimmering gold.

Behind the godmother on her throne comes the French-born Catholic priest, the last one in the procession. He is loudly singing hymns in his mother tongue, but his voice is drowned in the cracking shots from the roaring guns, the thunderous leathering away on the drums, tom, tom, the screaming song of the elders, aya-aya, the blustering, blazing fires along the road.

Finally the procession made its round and disappeared into the church from which they had come. Truly a queer performance. And as they say, "The Indians are good Catholics in their churches, and good pagans everywhere else."

As the crowd thinned out, we made our way to the Lawrences and joined them for a moment before we left the pueblo with our party. Lawrence was absent-minded and didn't talk of himself. He had to be pumped to get anything out of him, and that was unusual for him. But he was clearly preoccupied by some thought that held him incommunicado.

Whether he felt sheepish with us about being present after all his resistance and denunciation of the dance, or whether he was moved by the ceremonies, I shall leave unsaid. When asked if he didn't think it was worth while to have seen the dance, he barely admitted it, and slothfully so. And later, when we talked about the dance, he

showed no enthusiasm at all. Perhaps he had barely seen the dance, or been conscious of it, because he was pre-occupied by some thought that completely absorbed him at the time. But if his consciousness was somewhere else, his subconscious was present and alert and underneath registered what his eyes saw. He later wrote of the incident in his article, "New Mexico."

"Never shall I forget the Christmas dances at Taos. Twilight, snow, the darkness coming over the great wintry mountains and the lonely pueblo. Then suddenly, again, like dark calling to dark, the deep Indian cluster-singing around the drum, wild and awful suddenly rousing on the last dusk as the procession starts. And then the bonfires leaping suddenly in pure spurts of high flame, columns of sudden flame forming an alley for the procession."

With our companions, we went back to Taos. We had been invited to Meta Lehmann's studio, where we dined together with artist friends. After having eaten and consumed all her booze, Ufer invited the party over to his place. He had plenty of homebrew, and so we continued our drinking and radical talk into the wee hours of the morning.

Retiring to our lodging in a Mexican home, we were again confronted with the oft-recurring question, "Who's to sleep in the bed?" We flipped a coin. I lost, as usual, and accepted the chaise-longue as a matter of course. Our sleeping quarter was the best room in the house, a much-furnished drawing-room, that with all its Madonnas, crucifixes, rosaries, etc., looked more like a Catholic chapel than anything else.

In comparison with a Danish Christmas Eve, this was indeed a strange and queer one. The day was memorable. In the morning, with Lawrence and Frieda in a pioneer's log cabin away out in the wilderness—on horseback in deep snow through mountain forest.—Noon, rest in the middle of the warm desert.—Afternoon, tea with Chicago artists in a studio with Parisian atmosphere.—Twilight, to the Indian pagan festivities in the pueblo.—A turkey dinner with boot-leg burgundy in the society of artists of many nations, with radical talk and plenty of white mule.

And now we were undressing in this chapel. A bit tipsy, we asked the Madonnas on the wall to turn their faces the other way if they couldn't stand seeing Adam in his underwear. With the sound of the Indian tom-tom aya-aya still in our heavy heads, we rolled into bed and slept like logs.

The next morning, we called on the Lawrences, who, as I recall it, stayed at Nina Witt's house. We lunched at Ufer's and then went with the Lawrences to pay our respects to Mrs. Harwood, where we had tea before going to the deer dance at the pueblo. Then we parted with the Lawrences, who were to meet their guest and go back to the ranch. We dined and spent the evening at Mrs. Perkins' place with several artists and stayed on in Taos for a day or two more.

When we returned to Del Monte, we were introduced to Lawrence's New York publisher, Thomas Seltzer, and his wife, Adele Szold Seltzer. As Lawrence had business to transact with his publisher, we spent most of the time with the missus, hiking, horseback riding, etc. One evening we had both the Lawrences and the Seltzers to dinner at our cabin. I had shot a couple of wild rabbits for the occasion. We served cabbage soup, fried rabbit with French fried potatoes, and for dessert we had apple sauce with fresh cow's milk.

After dinner, I showed my preliminary sketches of illustrations for "Birds, Beasts and Flowers," and several jacket designs for various books of Lawrence's. Opinions differed somewhat. Lawrence had beforehand accepted my work, but Seltzer was not altogether happy about it, only accepting the jacket for "The Captain's Doll" offhand.

The strongest discussion centred around the jacket for "Kangaroo," perhaps the one I liked the best, but Seltzer was strongly opposed to it. We argued back and forth and then Lawrence put in, "I don't like the repetition of lines around the design. I really don't like repetitions!"

To which I replied, "A repetition of lines in design, and in words and sentences in poetry, gives rhythm, a factor an artist is working with."

"Yes, Lorenzo," Frieda cut in. "What would *you* do without repetition in your work?"

Lawrence gave in. It was finally decided that I make finished drawings of three jacket designs. The illustration for "Birds, Beasts and Flowers" was left undecided for the time being, as Seltzer was very much against it—more for economic than for artistic reasons, in spite of Lawrence's wishes.

Among several letters I have from the Seltzers, with whom I have corresponded off and on ever since, I find the one, filed away with my answer, which pertains to the foregoing.

"February 17, 1923.

DEAR MR. MERRILD—I have your three jackets, two of which I like very much—"Studies in Classic American Literature" and "The Captain's Doll." "Kangaroo" I am afraid will not do. The jacket problem, you know, is a very ticklish one. It is not merely a question of art, but of advertisement. The book cover has to stand out among hundreds of other books. This is especially true of a novel. I do not believe yours will. However, I am retaining it and paying you at the rate of \$40 apiece. I may decide to use it after all.

Enclosed is a check for \$120.—Sincerely yours,

THOMAS SELTZER."

My answer was:

"DEAR MR. SELTZER—Last week I received your letter and check for \$120, for which I thank you very much. I am glad to know that you like two of the covers, but I don't agree with you about the one for "Kangaroo." I am sure it is good and will do as a cover. If I didn't believe in it, I wouldn't have sent it. I shall be sorry if you don't use it. I consider it the best of the three covers, also as a matter of advertising, because it isn't a bit like others, therefore it will stand out.

Best regards to Mrs. Seltzer and you from us both (Gótzsche and I).—Sincerely yours,

KNUD MERRILD."

To those of the readers who can remember the covers, or perhaps still have them on their books, I must admit that to my regret, only "The Captain's Doll" was ever used. "Studies in Classic American Literature" came out

without any cover, and "Kangaroo" was, in my estimation, a terrible commercial thing to put on a Lawrence book. Lawrence agreed with me and was sorry for me and for his book.

"But that is how they are. We must keep on fighting!" he said.

Well, New Year's Eve we all celebrated at Lawrence's cabin, and on one of the following days the Seltzers left: she for New York and he for Hollywood, where he was to negotiate for the sale of "Women in Love," for which a request had been made by one of the film studios.

As the Seltzers had only been at the ranch a very short time, I felt that they would surely remember those days more clearly than I, and so I wrote to them and asked if they would try to recall incidents of their visit and let me know. Mr. Seltzer was kind enough to write me the following:

"November 5, 1934.

DEAR MERRILD—We were both glad to receive your letter. The times you refer to have already passed into history and it is a queer feeling to see our friends and ourselves in a historical background. Each time you write, this sense of a large part of me belonging to the past strikes me with renewed vigor and I don't know whether I ought to be glad or sad that a portion of myself is, so to speak, a fossil. In advance, I suppose, one would try to avoid spending a memorable week at the end of 1922 and the beginning of 1923 on Del Monte Ranch with Lawrence and Frieda and two picturesque Danish artists, if one but knew that in a few years one would be relegated thereby to a period distinctly removed from the present. But at the time when we gathered in Lawrence's log house to celebrate New Year's Eve, none of us thought of anything but the enjoyment of the moment in pleasant and far from Philistine company, and each contributed his share to make the modest little party as cheerful as possible. What I was struck by especially was the small but sweet voice of Lawrence. Do you remember his singing some English Christmas carols? I was particularly touched by his rendering of "Good King Quentin." I have heard

it sung many a time and was never impressed. Everyone seems to consider it a trifle and so it is. But the way Lawrence sang it, it had a haunting beauty that gripped you. I have often since tried to recapture that beauty and mentally I can do so but not if I try to sing it myself. I have asked others, with good trained voices, to sing it for me in the hope that they would reproduce for me the feel and the tang which it had in Lawrence's perfectly simply and unstrained recital, but always I was completely disappointed.

I mention this because to me it is typical of Lawrence the man as I perceive him. He is known to the world as a great poet and novelist, and as a curiosity, a piquant character, a sort of Don Juan who never practised his theoretical Don Juanism. But except for the fact that he was indeed a great novelist and poet, this conception of him as a man is, I know it for certain, all wrong. It is a fearful distortion. Lawrence was as great a man as he was a writer. In every aspect of life he was natural, without pose and, at bottom, sane. Follow him in the kitchen when he cooks, when he washes and irons his own underwear, when he does chores for Frieda, observe him when he walks with you in the country, when he is in the company of people whom he likes and to a certain extent respects—how natural he is in every movement and yet how distinguished, how satisfying because he is natural; and in his conversation he is almost always inspiring and interesting because of his extraordinary ability to create a flow, a current between himself and the other person. He had extraordinary poise, too. I wonder if you know what I mean? So many people dwell only on his fierce outbreaks. But to me his outbreaks, even if they belonged to the man, were not of the essence of him. The times and his environment are more to blame than himself.

You ask me to recall incidents of our visit. But how can I without writing a book? And I do not want to write one other book on Lawrence. Sometimes I have much to say about him. Sometimes I think I have nothing at all to say. If you were here and we could talk together, it would be much more satisfactory. You could perhaps get things out of me that might be useful

to you. But I am afraid it's too great a task to write, though I should very much like to help you. . . .

With best wishes from Adele and myself.—Yours,

THOMAS SELTZER."

After the Seltzers had left, we were naturally in a state of suspense, eagerly awaiting the outcome of Seltzer's contact with the film studios. In the days following, we discussed our pet topic: "Will Seltzer sell, and what will he get?" As I recall it, he had been offered ten thousand dollars and was holding out for some twenty or twenty-five thousand. Lawrence thought even twenty thousand was too much and that fifteen thousand would be a large price. He would have taken the ten thousand as offered, but left it entirely up to Seltzer.

Lawrence and Frieda would of course share it with the Danes, we were in on the deal. Lawrence wouldn't think of using all that money himself. He didn't feel he had a right to, or even that it belonged to him.

Many and varied were the air castles we built, even though we didn't dare believe they would come true. We took delight in the thought of building them anyhow. Sometimes our ventures went so far, forgetting all values, that we should have had at least ten times the amount of the highest price to carry them out. But what did it matter? We were just making excursions into the land of Fata Morgana. We were all set on travelling, that was sure. But it was never fully decided whether we should go overland down through old Mexico and into South America, or buy a small ship in which to cruise the southern seas in search of a place where we could live off and in Nature, starting a new life.

Certainly we would want to get away from the empty and horrible civilized world which only destroyed life when we wanted to build it up. To live a new life in a new spirit, off and on the soil. Or perhaps we would all go to Russia first. At least Russia had broken down the old regime and killed the greedy capitalistic system. Although Lawrence did not approve of the godless industrialized

machine age they were building up, he nevertheless talked much of going there. And he said: "When the flow is sympathetic, or love, then the weak, the woman, the masses, assume the positivity. But the balance even is only kept by stern *authority*, the unflinching obstinacy of the return-force, of power.

"When the flow is power, might, majesty, glory, then it is a culminating flow towards one individual, through circles of aristocracy towards one grand centre. Emperor, Pope, Tyrant, King: whatever he may be. It is the grand obeisance before a master.

"In the balance of these two flows lies the secret of human stability. In the absolute triumph of either flow lies the immediate surety of collapse.

"We have gone very far in the first direction. Democracy has almost triumphed. The only real master left is the boss in industry. And he is to be dethroned. Labour is to wear the absolute crown of the everyday hat. Even the top hat is doomed. Labour shall be its own boss, and possess its own means and ends. The serpent shall swallow itself in a last gulp.

"Mastership is based on possessions. To kill mastership you must have communal ownership. Then have it, for this superiority based on possession of money is worse than any of the pretensions of Labour or Bolshevism, strictly. Let the serpent swallow itself. Then we can have a new snake.

"The moment Labour takes upon itself to be its own boss, the whole show is up, the end has begun. While ever the existing boss succeeds in hanging on to his money capital, we get the present condition of nullity and nagging. We're between the devil and a deep sea.

"All this theoretical socialism started by Jews like Marx, and appealing only to the will-to-power in the masses, making money the whole crux, this has cruelly injured the working people of Europe. For the working people of Europe were generous by nature, and money was not their prime passion. All this political socialism—all politics, in fact—have conspired to make money the only god. It has

been a great, treacherous conspiracy against the generous heart of the people. And that heart is betrayed: and knows it."

And he went on to say:

"Bolshevism is at least not sentimental. It's a last step towards an end, a hopeless end. But better disaster than an equivocal nothingness, like the present."

Another place he wanted to visit was Greenland. Gótzsche and I had talked so much about this immense Danish colony, the world's largest island, of its vast beauty and the simple life of its inhabitants, that it had aroused Lawrence's curiosity and he was seriously considering the venture to this far-away land in the frozen north. He even went so far as to write his friends in Europe about the possibility of his going there.

As long as Seltzer remained in Los Angeles, we continued to build castles and blow bubbles. They looked pretty in the air, but as Seltzer returned to New York without succeeding, they crumbled and broke, one by one. The sale of "Women in Love" did not materialize. We were not disappointed. We had not dared really to believe it would come true. Just a pretty dream!

We had another guest at the ranch for a short time. I should have forgotten him had it not been for just one incident that still remains fresh. He was Lawrence's New York agent who came out to arrange about some business. He stayed with the rancher at the big house. He was to have his breakfast with us in our cabin, and lunch and supper at Lawrence's.

As I have mentioned before, we had only one room, a kitchen and a storeroom. We had made the room with the fireplace our studio. As it contained an old wooden couch and a dilapidated drop-leaf table, there was hardly place for our beds if we were to have room enough to work. The kitchen was just another room with a cooking stove in it, but it was large enough for our beds, so it was also our bedroom; and as there was a small table by the window, it consequently served as dining-room as well.

Now that we were to have a boarder, we asked Lawrence



Living room in Lawrence's Cabin. Above mantel is a water colour copy by Lawrence

about him, and whether we could serve him breakfast in our combination kitchen-bedroom-dining-room, or whether we should serve it in the studio. Lawrence didn't want us to change our habits for our boarder. He wouldn't consider the extravagance of heating another room just for him to eat breakfast in. We never heated the studio before noon for reasons of a dual economy: to save wood, and the labour of sawing and chopping it. The kitchen was heated by the stove on which we cooked, that's why we ate there. It was good enough for the Lawrences and us, and it would have to be good enough for him. Lawrence couldn't see anything wrong in that.

He would also have to eat what we ate, there was nothing else to serve. As eggs were scarce and bacon a prohibitive expense, we only had bacon and eggs as a rare treat. Our regular breakfast was porridge, alternated with mush, a change in name if nothing else, bread and coffee. We even had mush for dinner, too, a couple of days a week, and so that we might not tire of it, we varied its seasoning with sugar, syrup, honey or apple sauce. Often we mixed the mush half and half with apple sauce, which is pretty good. So whether you call it mush or porridge, we had a fair variety of flavour for the tongue and palate. We always had fresh, newly milked raw milk, and also home-made, fresh-churned butter, good bread baked by Lawrence, coffee or tea. We had to economize a little on the butter, which was easily managed by using the lard on our sandwiches. What more can one expect, 'way out in the wilderness, nine thousand feet above sea-level?

We made up our beds and tidied the room and so, when our boarder arrived, he was served in a neat room on a clean tablecloth. It was a wholesome breakfast, but despite our efforts, it proved to be too tiresome for the New Yorker. He didn't like to eat in our bedroom-kitchen and he didn't like our breakfast either. He went to Lawrence to tattle and complain about it. But Lawrence couldn't serve him much better, and furthermore, he would not have him for breakfast. So then our boarder was compelled to eat at the rancher's. There he could perhaps get his customary

bacon and eggs, hot cakes, waffles and what-nots, and be comparatively happy.

So were we happy to get rid of our fussy customer. We had been very nice to him, but nevertheless he had criticized us to Lawrence, and so foolishly that Lawrence told us about it. He was a bit annoyed about it and put the agent in his place. Lawrence would always stick up for us and strongly defend us if anybody jealously tried to pull us down and belittle us to him.

For some reason or other the fellow overstayed the intended visit. Lawrence got tired of him and fired him as his agent. I could go into more detail about it, but I had better not. I will be kind to him and not tell too much.

Rid of our last guest, we were again left to ourselves and once more settled down to our primitive life and habitual doings, feeling much better off.

About that time we got this letter from Ufer:

"TAOS, N. M.,
Jan. 5, 1923.

DEAR MERRILD AND GÓTZSCHE—I leave the 6th for Chicago over the Santa Fé Railway. Before leaving I want to express to you what fine fellows both of you are. I am glad that you came to Taos and that I could meet you.

Mary will stay on a little while longer. She said that you wanted 'Scotti' until you leave for the west. I would be pleased if you would come down on horse and get him when Mary notifies you to come. Get the violin also—and Mary will give you instructions where to leave everything when you go further west!

Wishing you all the very best in life, and hoping that I may again see you somewhere.—I am, sincerely yours,
WALTER UFER."

When notified by Mrs. Ufer (Mary) we went down to get "Scotti" the airedale, of which I will tell more later, and the violin. The violin was for Gótzsche to play. One day when he was practising, the rancher came by. Hearing the music, he came in to see us. We talked about music and instruments of course, and quite naturally he asked me

if I played, too. I was proud to tell him that I, too, had played the violin for a few years but had given it up in favour of the flute, that I had played the flute in an amateur orchestra. He looked at me with a grin, probably thinking, "I will find you out"—and then casually he said, "I have an old flute lying around somewhere in the house. If we can find it, you can have it."

I took him up on it right away. It startled him a bit, perhaps he thought I was bluffing. We went straight to the ranch house in search of the flute. Our determination to find the instrument was crowned after having ransacked many obscure hiding-places. It had formerly had eight keys, but the two lower ones were missing and so was the cork on the joints. However, it was not wholly beyond repair and despite the missing keys, I fixed it up well enough to play on.

Bill, the rancher, had followed me back to our cabin. Apparently he was not going to leave me until he had heard me play. I was a little nervous at his hanging on and I told him I hadn't played for several years. I started out, trying the flute with a few runs and scales, and then jumped into one of my old bravura numbers. I was amazed at how well I remembered the tune and was happy to finish to the approval of my listeners.

Gótzsche had some piano music, so we practised together. But as this material was soon exhausted, we wrote to New York for some Danish music sheets.

We tried to keep our musical activities a secret from Lawrence, but somehow it leaked out, and when he asked us about it, we had to confess. But when he requested us to play for him, we refused on the ground that we did not think we played well enough to make it pleasurable for listeners. After much bickering, we agreed to play for him and Frieda in a couple of weeks, after we had had time to practise. We promised that when we had a repertoire, we would come to their house some evening and play for them.

Faithfully we practised twice daily and when we thought we knew our programme well enough, we arranged the evening for our concert.

When we arrived at Lawrence's, the atmosphere was tense and full of expectancy, like a "first night" at the opera. We fussed around and moved the music frame from one place to another to get a good light, and when finally established, tuned our instruments extra-fine. We then started on our repertoire. Sternly serious and with great sincerity we played Händel's "Largo." When we had finished our piece, we lowered our instruments in expectation of a well-earned compliment.

With great emphasis, Lawrence burst forth, "How perfectly awful! Of all things, why did you have to play that?"

Frieda applauded generously and told us we did it very nicely. And then she promptly remonstrated with Lawrence for his cruel exclamation. Gótzsche and I paid little or no attention to Lawrence's outburst and ignored him completely, talking only to Frieda, and she said, "Please do play some more."

We announced our next piece, another classic, which we demonstratively played with an overemphasis of feeling. Lawrence liked it even less than the first, but we were determined to complete our programme whether Lawrence liked it or not. And undisturbed I said with a smile, "Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, we have completed the classical part of our repertoire. (Here Lawrence clapped violently in approval.) We shall now play for you some very charming Danish folk melodies. The first one will be "Lette Bølge," an ode to the blue waves of the idyllic inland lakes of Denmark.

"How poetic," said Frieda.

"How dreadful!" said Lawrence.

By now we were masters of the situation and ourselves and, unaffected, we played on, not for our listeners but simply for ourselves. When we finished, Lawrence surprised us by saying, "Not so bad," and Frieda said, "How perfectly charming!" Lawrence sardonically sneered at her for her lavish praise.

Unvexed, I went on to say, "We will now play an old Danish folk-song about a girl waiting for her lover. It is very sad, for the lover never showed up. It has innumerable

verses and the title is 'It was a Saturday Eve,' and it ends something like this:

How can one pick roses
where roses don't reside?
How can one find love
where love does not abide?

That amused Lawrence, he was in a different mood now. We went on with our tune and before we had finished, both he and Frieda tried to catch on, and so, despite the innumerable verses, we received unanimous applause and had to give *da capo*. We kept on until they both could hum the tune.

Then I said, "Well, we have had enough of sadness, we will now conclude our programme with boldness. The tune we will now play is from Jutland and the verses are in dialect. The title is, 'The Jutlander, he is strong and tough,' and that just about explains its contents."

Lawrence liked the tune so well that he also wanted to know the words. So we had to sing it for him. He learned very quickly, and before we left he could sing the tune in the Jutland dialect. The evening ended successfully and quite happily we went home.

The evening was soon repeated. We did not, however, play any more classical music; not because we thought it hurt Lawrence's fine musical ear—he was not such a connoisseur of music. He didn't care for or appreciate most classical music, even when played by symphony orchestras.

Frieda had a much keener appreciation of music than he did. She played the piano well and also had a good voice. It simply bored Lawrence to listen, and mostly, I think, that he couldn't participate—he hated to be left out. It was of course more social if we could all join in and make it a sort of family game, and therefore we played only folk-music: German, French, English and Danish; and so we all united in the spirit of these simple tunes, and I must say, we thoroughly enjoyed it.

But one evening it wasn't enough for Lawrence to just sing. He had to produce music himself, and so he got a

comb and a piece of paper and played on that. He wasn't good at it and couldn't keep time nor tune and so, desperately, he composed his own tune and played along with us. But to stifle him, we did the same, and so he frantically played louder and louder. Alas, so did we! Then he got up and tramped around the room and promptly we followed him.

Frieda had a good laugh and endured this caterwauling cacophony for some time, but we kept on, working ourselves up to a higher and higher pitch. Then Frieda disappeared into the kitchen, returned shortly with a couple of pot-lids which she energetically banged together like cymbals, and joined us in our march around the room. We worked ourselves into an ecstasy and kept on till we were exhausted. Then we dropped on chairs or on the floor, and capped the climax with a hearty laugh.

We all felt very good after that. It may sound silly that grown-ups should carry on this way. Nevertheless, that's what we did, and we didn't feel silly, either. Pent-up emotion, serious thought, were relieved. Some unconscious tension was broken through our complete recklessness, our childishness, our absolute letting ourselves go; a plunge into dissipation to be reborn. It is sometimes essential in order to be reborn.

The rottenness of society, the chaos of the world and the multitudinous problems of life weighed heavily on the mind of Lawrence. We had constant discussions about it. He would always start something, he always had something on his mind and he would always bring it forth. And then, sometimes, he could venture into paths of thought that neither Frieda nor we were qualified to tread. We simply could not follow the depth of his vision nor the height of his thoughts. Frieda would sometimes call it rot, and we would be passive, but that did not stop him. If he was in the mood, he would go on questioning and answering himself, and his thoughts would continue their flights to invisible heights through the richness of the finest nuances of the spoken word.

As a narrator, he was a virtuoso. With great affection,

he would describe the birds, the beasts and the flowers, while the abominable world of today brought him into a fury of burning hatred. Often he would say, "Certainly with this world I am at war."

He was great at improvisation, and he always had something vital to say, something worthy of repeated reflection. One was never bored in his society. On the contrary, no matter how often one saw him, it was always a revelation. It might, of course, leave one tired, very tired indeed, but never of him. It was impossible not to be moved by him—often to the point of agitation. It was a tug, a pull, and tore at one's emotions. A desperate wearing down of one's feelings that made one very tired; one became both bodily and mentally distressed. So intense were his emotions that he made us suffer with him and the whole world.

The seriousness of thought and depth of feeling became a burden. It weighed so heavily at times that it was unbearable and had to be shed off, and that is why, I believe, we could so easily and completely abandon ourselves, in play, or in singing simple tunes. As Lawrence said, "We can't always suck lemons."

In play or in serious mood, however, there always seemed to be an almost perfect relationship, or perhaps better still, what Lawrence called flow, or the breath of life.

"What is this flow or breath of life? My dear," he would say, "it is the strange current of interchange that flows between men and men, and men and women, and men and things. A constant current of interflow, a constant vibrating interchange. That is the breath of life.

"And this interflow, this electric vibration, is polarized. There is a positive and a negative polarity. This is a law of life, of vitalism. Only ideas are final, finite, static and single.

"All life-interchange is a polarized communication. A circuit.

"*Perfect* relationship cannot be," he said. "Each soul is alone, and the aloneness of each soul is a double barrier to perfect relationship between two beings.

"Each soul *should* be alone. And in the end, the desire for a 'perfect relationship' is just a vicious, unmanly craving. (Tous nos malheurs viennent de ne pouvoir être seuls.)

"The world ought *not* to be a harmonious, loving place. It ought to be a place of fierce discord and intermittent harmonies: which it is.

"Love ought *not* to be perfect. It ought to have perfect moments, and wilderness of thorn bushes: which it has.

"A 'perfect relationship' ought *not* to be possible. Every relationship should have its absolute limits, its absolute reserves, essential to the singleness of the soul in each person. A truly perfect relationship is one in which each party leaves great tracts unknown in the other party.

"No two persons can meet at more than a few points, consciously. If two people can just be together fairly often, so that the presence of each is a sort of balance to the other, that is the basis of perfect relationship. There must be true separateness as well."

He said, "Love ought not to be perfect. It ought to have perfect moments, and wilderness of thorn bushes. Which it has!!"

That reminds me of an incident. While in Taos, we had heard rumours about the Lawrences having violent quarrels, and of Lawrence's terrific temper, but we had paid little attention. For almost half a year I saw them daily, and for four months we lived together, ate together, travelled together, even, on occasion, slept together in the same rooms. As Frieda says, we knew them more intimately than any human beings before us or any after us. It cannot be denied that they had their quarrels, they both admitted it. Personally, however, I must confess that I don't remember any quarrels at all, certainly no serious ones. They didn't always agree, of course, and each would fight for his opinion, but I would hardly call that quarrelling.

I recall only one serious incident, and I would call that a hysterical outbreak on Lawrence's part rather than a quarrel. *A verbes ad verbera*. We had lunch one day at his house. The conversation roamed freely and spirits ran

high. Lawrence and Gótzsche were sitting on one side of the table, Frieda and I on the other, with Lawrence opposite Frieda. When we had finished our lunch, Gótzsche and I lit our pipes and Frieda her cigarette, as we always did after a meal. Lawrence did not smoke, but had no objection to others smoking. Frieda, however, had a very nonchalant way with her cigarette. She even spoke with it dangling from the corner of her mouth. That day, it must have annoyed Lawrence. He resented it very much and said suddenly, without any apparent motive:

"Frieda, stop your smoking."

"And why should I?" she replied.

"I won't have it. Take that cigarette out of your mouth," he said with anger.

Provoked, she retorted: "I will not."

In a fury, Lawrence leaped to his feet, leaned over the table, and swung his arm full force at Frieda's face, trying with his hand to knock the cigarette out of her mouth. But she was too quick for him. She dodged the mighty swing and Lawrence missed his aim.

Further infuriated by his failure with force and by Frieda's continued smoking, he grabbed the almost full package of cigarettes lying on the table and in a hysterical rage crushed and ground the cigarettes in the palm of his hand and then threw the remains on the fire, scolding Frieda all the while and calling her all sorts of names. Exasperated, Frieda combated him, still smoking. Lawrence, in an extremity of rage, tried to hit her again and missed again. She ran into the kitchen. Gótzsche and I rose from the table.

From the doorway, Frieda turned and sneered at him: "You brute, you bully, why did you do that?"

"Why don't you have the strength of mind not to ask?" he retorted. "You know it's better you let it alone."

She gave him one fierce look, then went pale with anger. She was silent for a moment, then burst out: "Pah, as if I cared! You think that nothing but goodness and virtue and wonderfulness come out of you. You don't know how small and mean and ugly you are, you petty, conceited

creature. You're not big enough, not grateful enough to do anything real. I give you my energy and my life, and you treat me as if I were a charwoman. Acknowledge me first, if you have any gratitude, before you can be any good."

"Damn you and your gratitude. When you thwart me and put me in a temper, I don't feel anything but spite for you. Damn your impudent gratitude."

I do not remember exactly all the words that were flung about, but I have a clear picture of Frieda in the doorway to the kitchen, concluding with: "Lorenzo, you must apologize to the Danes."

He didn't answer. He was walking up and down. Apparently he was beginning to come to his senses, and he must have been feeling what he once wrote:

"He just felt generally diabolical. He was forced to recognize the devil in his own belly. He just felt devilish. Theoretically he was grateful to her, and all that. But nothing conjured away that bellyful of black devilishness with which he was enceinte. He really felt like a woman who is with child by a corrosive fiend. In his lower man, just grinning and demoniacal. No good pretending otherwise. No good playing tricks of being nice. Seven thousand devils!"

Needless to say, it was a very embarrassing situation for all of us. Gótzsche and I left.

Lawrence must have been busy baking that afternoon. The next morning, he came to our cabin with newly-baked bread and cakes; his form of apology, but never in words.

And in the afternoon, when Lawrence had gone to the mail box, Frieda also came to our cabin—not with cakes but with a carton of her indispensable cigarettes. She was afraid of having them in the house for fear that Lawrence might find them and destroy her precious nicotine. She asked if she could keep the carton on my shelf. We never locked the cabin, so she could just walk in any time and help herself to a package. Prohibition again proved itself a failure.

At this time, Frieda took me into her confidence and

said: "Merrild, you probably know that I have been married before and have three children with my former husband. When we were divorced, he forbade me ever to see my children again or write to them. And so did Lawrence. He won't let me talk about them, or even mention their names. At times, it becomes unbearable for me."

"I think I can understand how a mother must feel," I said. I felt a deep sympathy for her and asked how old the children were and if they were well.

"That is just what I don't know," she said. "I haven't had any news about them for ages. My friends in England have been keeping me informed, but I haven't heard anything for a long time and am very worried. And when they do write, and Lawrence sees the letters, he becomes infuriated. Then we have endless quarrels, which I really wouldn't mind so much if only I knew that my children were well."

From behind her apron she brought forth a letter and handed it to me, asking if I would put it in the mail box. Best to wait till Lawrence had posted his own mail and returned to the house, in order to make sure he would not find out. I promised.

Lawrence could be expected to come by our cabin any minute now, so Frieda left hurriedly. He might step in and find us alone in the cabin. Since we had been conspiring, we might not feel at ease and perhaps Lawrence would detect our uneasiness. And what would happen then? Now don't misunderstand me. It was not that Lawrence mistrusted us. Frieda often came to our cabin alone, which Lawrence did not mind, of course. And sometimes Lawrence and Gótzsche would go for a walk and I would remain with Frieda to keep her company.

Well, when Lawrence had passed the cabin on his return and was well out of sight, I went to the mail box with Frieda's letter. What a mail box that was, that ordinary old packing box with leather straps for hinges, nailed to a tree on the trail. I opened it to post Frieda's letter, then hesitated. I didn't dare put it in there with Lawrence's

mail. What if he had forgotten something and came back and noticed Frieda's letter? I waited for the mailman on horseback and gave it to him.

I thought it was rather petty of Lawrence to forbid his wife to seek news about the welfare of her children; I thought it rather egotistical and cruel. I tried to analyse his behaviour. I thought he was pretty small about this, but I also knew he was big, so I concluded that perhaps he was being wise. He was a psychologist and supposed to know people. Perhaps he had made his analysis and was acting accordingly. If that were so, he was carrying out a scheme, he who hated scheming. No, that I didn't believe. He would not betray himself like that, he who wanted to let life rule, to be guided by feelings and live from the solar plexus; he who detested living from the head. He had more than once accused me of living too much from my head, and here I was trying to find a reason to justify his behaviour.

But I couldn't make it come out right. I still thought he was pretty small with Frieda about her cigarettes and her children. He let his inner self rule, and his better self was overpowered by these other forces. Well, anyway, he had the courage to carry through his convictions, to let his feelings or innermost reactions come forth, however degrading they might be to his other self and to us. He did have the courage to be his uttermost self, whether it were good or bad. Courage, or weakness, perhaps. Honesty, perhaps. How do I know? I know it is not for me to know Lawrence. He had plenty of trouble trying to know himself.

Anyway, all this high-faluting psychology-business is the bunk. How easy it is to discard what we don't know; or is it? And so I ended the conversation with myself as I reached the cabin after my walk to the mail box.

Lawrence continued as usual to come to our cabin in the afternoon for his tea and a chat. The chat nearly always developed into a discussion or a revelation by him. The cigarette incident was never touched upon. The first couple of days were perhaps a little strained, but soon all

went smoothly again. It was during those first days that I remember he said:

"Each of us has two selves. First is this body which is vulnerable and never quite within our control. The body with its irrational sympathies and desires and passions, its peculiar direct communication, defying the mind. And second is the conscious ego, the self I KNOW I am.

"The self that lives in my body I can never finally know. It has such strange attractions and revulsions and it lets me in for so much irrational suffering, real torment, and occasional frightening delight. The ME that is in my body is a strange animal to me, and often a very trying one. My body is like a jungle in which dwells an unseen me, like a black panther in the night, whose two eyes glare green through my dreams, and, if a shadow falls, through my waking day.

"Then there is the other me, that is fair-faced and reasonable and sensible and complex and full of good intentions, the known me, which can be seen and appreciated. I say of myself: Yes, I know I am impatient and rather intolerant in ideas. But in the ordinary way of life I am quite easy and really rather kindly. My kindness makes me sometimes a bit false. But then I don't believe in mechanical honesty. There is an honesty of the feelings, of the sensibilities, as well as of the mind. If a man is lying to me, and I know it, it is a matter of choice whether I tell him so or not. If it would only damage his real feelings, and my own, then it would be emotionally dishonest to call him a liar to his face. I would rather be a bit mentally dishonest and pretend to swallow the lie.

"This is the known me, having a talk with itself. It sees a reason for everything it does and feels. It has a certain belief in its own good intentions. It tries to steer a sensible and harmless course among all the other people and 'personalities' around itself. To this known me, everything exists as a term of knowledge. A man is what I know he is. I am what I know I am. To the known me nothing exists beyond what I know. True, I am always adding to the things I know. But this is because, in my

opinion, knowledge begets knowledge. Not because anything has entered from the outside. There is no outside. There is only more knowledge to be added.

"I believe strongly in the blood, the flesh, as being wiser than the intellect. We can go wrong in our minds. But what our blood feels and believes and says, is always true, the intellect is only a bit and a bridle. What do I care about knowledge? All I want is to answer to my blood, direct, without fribbling intervention of mind, or moral, or what-not. I conceive a man's body as a kind of flame, like a candle flame, forever upright and yet flowing. And the intellect is just the light that is shed on the things around. And I am not so much concerned with the things around—which is really mind—but with the mystery of the flame forever flowing, coming God knows how from out of practically nowhere, and being itself whatever there is around it, that it lights up. We have got so ridiculously mindful that we never know that we ourselves are anything—we think there are only the objects we shine upon. And there the poor flame goes on burning ignored, to produce this light. And instead of chasing the mystery in the fugitive half-lighted things outside us, we ought to look at ourselves, and say '*My God I am myself.*' We know too much. No, we only think we know such a lot. A flame isn't a flame because it lights up two or twenty objects on a table. It's a flame because it is itself. And we have forgotten ourselves. *We are Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark.* We cannot BE. To be or not to be—is the question with us now. First to be, and then to know yourself. Attempt to learn, by living, to BE, and to learn, by living, to KNOW."

For some reason or other, we were all assembled at the Lawrence house one forenoon, when we suddenly became aware of a noise we seldom heard up here. It was that of an automobile labouring in the foothills below, apparently having some difficulties in making the snow-covered grades. We listened—and by the sound of the motor, we knew it was a big car. As it came nearer, we suspected a possible visit. Who could it be? Nobody had served any notice of coming.

"If that car is coming up here, I will go off the stage," said Lawrence.

"You will not," said Frieda.

"You'll see if I don't," he replied.

And Frieda growled her "*contra bonos mores*," to which Lawrence responded with his "*coute que coute*."

The car came to a stop and in the clear, frosty air, we could hear voices—the voices of women. Apparently, the car had stopped at the gate in the wire-fence down by the road. Yes, now we could hear it creak, and as if that was a given signal, Lawrence hastily grabbed a couple of apples from a tray on the table and moved toward the back door of the house, saying:

"Don't keep them any longer than you have to, whoever they are. I will not come back until I hear the car leaving the place. Auf wiedersehn!"

"Oh, Lorenzo," Frieda began, but he closed the door behind him, and through the window we could see him disappear into the forest.

Frieda was dumbfounded, and before she could recover from her surprise, Gótzsche and I left, too. We, too, didn't want to meet the people we thought were coming. We didn't try to catch up with Lawrence, but went to our cabin by a roundabout route.

In the middle of the afternoon we heard the motor starting, warming up, and through our windows watched for it to pass just a few feet from our door on its way down. We had been right in our surmise. It was Mabel with a party.

When the car was out of sight and could no longer be heard, we went up to see Frieda. Lawrence had not yet returned.

"Nice fellows you all are, leaving me alone like that," she said smiling.

"Women talk best when alone," we said, and returned the smile.

Frieda's feelings about the visit were mixed—she was not altogether happy about it but she was stimulated by the break in the routine of everyday life. When Lawrence came

back, she said, "It was Mabel," and he merely replied, "Well, what's the gossip?"

He was annoyed by the visit. He didn't want women or Mabel or anybody else to chase him, he wanted to be left alone. What the gossip was I don't remember. I guess it doesn't matter.

But Frieda said to him, "You run away from gossip and still you want to hear it." And to this, he simply replied, "It is a writer's business to know."

A few days later came a letter from Mabel inviting all of us on a motor trip to see the Indian dances at San Ildefonso. Now this sudden generosity in inviting all of us needs an explanation. She had previously invited Lawrence and Frieda without us, but Lawrence had declined on the ground that he did not wish to leave his guests behind. Now she was apparently longing so strongly for her wish or will-fulfilment that she ignored her former stand. She was very angry with Lawrence because he had annexed Gótzsche and myself and taken us along to the ranch. It seemed to her that Lawrence thereby sought to fill her place too easily, with those simple, unremarkable characters, those two stray Danish artists who had wandered into Taos.

She had pleaded most emphatically that she would not go up and see us. She didn't want to see us up here. What she wanted was the daily, rhythmical interchange of power and life with Lawrence. She would not be satisfied to drop in for a cup of tea and ordinary intercourse with other people. (Not even with the people the extraordinary Lawrence had chosen for companions in preference to her.) Alas, it is one thing to promise, another to fulfil. Now she had just been to our ranch, but Lawrence and the Danes had "vamoosed" into the dark, dark forest. Again she was defeated, but still she didn't give up. If she couldn't reach Lawrence personally, perhaps a letter could.

You see, her life missed him so very, very much that now she thought she had hurt and punished him enough, and nursed the hope that she could patch up the break between them so that she might see him again. It was apparently also important for her to have Lawrence see the

dance at San Ildefonso. Therefore came the letter inviting us all. However, it must have cost her a great effort to prevail upon herself to invite the Danes, so great an effort that she couldn't disguise her unwillingness to do so.

Lawrence saw through the disguise right away. The letter made him absolutely furious. He passed it on to us to read for ourselves, with the disgusted remark, "And with the Danes, we shall be seven."

In the letter, Mabel mentioned the participants for the proposed trip: Lawrence and Frieda, herself and Tony, a fifth person I don't remember—"and with the Danes, we shall be seven." I shall remember that sentence the rest of my life. Not because she wrote it, but because Lawrence repeated it so often and because of the attitude with which he regarded it:

"The nasty bitch," he said. "It is a seven-passenger car with plenty of room for all of us. It is an insult to us all. And to anticipate that I would go and leave my guests behind! Indecent, and ill-bred, too. She wants to show me that you are a chain around my legs, and suggests I get rid of it." And then he broke out in a stream of curses.

His mind was made up. He would most emphatically not go. "Basta!!!"

We asked him not to take it that way and to accept; not to mind about us, we wouldn't accept her hospitality anyway. It would be false since she had so definitely shown that she didn't want us. Frieda was passive, but we thought she would like to go. We were very sorry to stand in their way. We begged Lawrence to go. "Do it for our sake," we pleaded, but he would not listen. He sat down and wrote the following letter and refused to accept the invitation.

"DEL MONTE RANCH, VALDEZ,
Saturday.

DEAR MABEL—No, I don't think I want to go to San Ildefonso. Neither, yet, to old Mexico. I don't feel angry. But just that I want to be alone—as much alone as I am—while I am here.—Yrs,

D. H. LAWRENCE."

When Gótzsche and I were back in our cabin, we talked about it. It hurt us that we should be the fly in the ointment. Damn that woman, if she had only had some horse sense and practical experience of life instead of a head full of book-reading, psychological theories and what not, she couldn't have blundered like that. How little she knew of men, not the simplest thing about their make-up—particularly of Lawrence and us. It should have been easy to keep Lawrence's friendship uninterrupted if she hadn't been blinded by Love or Ego or both. Selfishness stood in her way, and therefore she never really gained the real friendship of D. H. Lawrence.

Lawrence had hated and cursed Mabel time and again, but this time it was final. He decided she wasn't even worth anger or hate; he threw her out of his consciousness and wanted to forget her. "Thank God," as Frieda replied. And we, too, could only agree to that.

From Taos we heard that Mabel was sick. She had swooned and been unconscious for twenty-four hours. When we heard this news, Lawrence was not alarmed. He just said it was defeat, that her will had been defeated for the first time and that she couldn't stand it. We believed he was right.

Lawrence had deserted Taos because he wanted to be left alone, not to be pursued by Mabel or anybody else. Taos, with its Mabel and suppers and motor drives and people dropping in, had been too much. As he wrote in a letter at the time:

"These women in breeches and riding-boots and sombreros, and money and motor cars and wild west. It is all inwardly a hard stone and nothingness. Only the desert has a fascination—to ride *alone*—in the sun, in the forever unpossessed country—away from man."

And he said, "The only thing one can stick to is one's isolate being and the God in whom it is rooted. And the only thing to look to is the God who fulfils one from the dark. And the only thing to wait for is for men to find their aloneness and their God in the darkness. Then

one can meet as worshippers, in a sacred contact in the dark."

Or, as he said in "Birds, Beasts and Flowers":

"Going down the strange lanes of hell, more and more intensely
alone,

The fibres of the heart parting one after the other,
And yet the soul continuing, naked footed, ever more vividly
embodied

Like a flame blown whiter and whiter

In a deeper and deeper darkness

Ever more exquisite, distilled in separation."

Lawrence wanted to be left alone and to a great extent succeeded. The out-of-the-way and often impassable roads covered with deep snow, made communication almost impossible, so our privacy was only interrupted a few times.

Early one afternoon, Gótzsche and I were at our cabin when a stranger knocked at our door. He entered our small cabin and he looked huge, in a huge fur coat. He was warm and panting after the walk uphill in the snow, so his coat was unbuttoned, displaying a lot of Indian silver jewelry—bracelets, rings, necklace and what-not—and he had a green silk handkerchief around his neck, too, cowboy style.

He took a hasty glance around the room and at us, muttered a greeting of some sort and said, "I suppose you are the Danes." And after we had briefly answered "yes," he said: "My name is Bynner—Witter Bynner. Can you tell me where Lawrence's house is?"

We told him. He made a few conventional remarks and told us his car was stuck further down on the mountainside. He cursed the roads and went on towards Lawrence's house.

He had been very friendly in his approach, but in spite of that we could not help being amused at his attire. And I said, "If he must wear all that silver, why doesn't he put a ring in his nose, too, to make it complete? It would suit the husky better and change his appearance from a bulky amorphous mass to a real savage, a formidable warrior, wild man."

I don't remember whether Bynner had written Lawrence for an appointment or not, but he probably had, for it was

a long way to come from Santa Fé, about a hundred miles, and take the chance of not finding him in. But anyway, I think it was his good luck that he got stuck in the snow, for if Lawrence had heard an automobile approach his "Parnassus," he would probably have disappeared into the woods. Now the guest could come "pussyfoot" and be welcome.

Another visitor who succeeded in finding us all at home also arrived on foot. Meta Lehmann. She had bummed a ride from Taos with a Mexican—across the desert to Arroyo Hondo, and had then hiked the rest of the way up through the mountains. As it was a very strenuous walk through the snow, she was naturally very tired when she arrived in the afternoon. She knew both the Lawrences and ourselves, but had come primarily to visit us. She had a studio in Taos, made designs, wrote songs and put them to music.

Meta was a very broadminded person, carefree and hospitable. She was a friend of the Indian and a student of his life and customs.

The Indians liked her very much, and she them. She spoke their language, too, as well as Spanish. She never locked her door—anybody could just walk in and make himself at home. I remember that on several occasions when I was shopping in the forenoon, I would drop in to see her. Apparently she would be out shopping, too, but there would be half a dozen Indians squatting on the floor before the fireplace, smoking. They, too, had come to visit a friend, a friend who liked them all for themselves, unselfishly, without pride or politics—simply as friend to friend.

She was very generous and always shared whatever she had to share with whoever happened to be around. She didn't have very much to divide, but she got along anyhow. She was not only kind to mankind but to animals as well. Stray cats or dogs couldn't come to her door without getting a bite to eat or a drop of milk to drink. One winter evening, she took in a bloodhound bitch and when she woke up in the morning, she found that during the night the dog had whelped and given birth to a litter of eight pups. She cared for them all.

It was in her studio that I saw the Indian most completely unfold himself. At Mabel's, he was a performer; in artists' studios, he posed; in his own pueblo, he was an attraction for tourists; and around the Taos Plaza he was a beggar for money or for a fag. At a White party, he was self-conscious, shy, and completely wrapped in his blanket. But at Meta's studio, he was most often himself. There was no sense of superiority or inferiority, but an air of equality. When I would come in, she would introduce me to them—six, or eight, or as many as happened to be there. Some would be false in their free aping of American jargon. Others would be shy and close up. But I would often make myself inconspicuous, pick up a magazine and seat myself behind the piano or in an obscure corner of the studio, pretending to be wholly absorbed in reading but actually looking out of the corner of my eye, and it seldom took long before I was forgotten.

Meta would speak to them in Mexican or the Indian tongue, and their seeming stupidity would soon leave them. Quickly they would find themselves and become natural and charming, as they really are. Meta would play the piano, or they would beat the drum, or both, and sing and dance without being asked. Just because they wanted to, liked to or couldn't resist it.

Now, here she was at the ranch, which had required quite a physical effort. She had come to discuss with Gótzsche and me the details of an exhibition at the Santa Fé Museum which she had unselfishly arranged for us. And also to talk about cover designs I had made for some of her music which was to be published. But she had no better luck with her publisher on the cover designs than Lawrence had had with his. Again I was told my work was too modern, too radical. Meta, like Lawrence, had to accept the ordinary and banal stuff.

After we had talked business and heard her news from Taos, we asked her where she was going to stay for the night, at Lawrence's or at the rancher's house.

"Neither," she said. "Frankly, I expect to stay with you boys if you don't mind."

We said we didn't mind but thought that it might create a lot of unpleasant gossip about her. After all, she was an unmarried woman, and sleeping under the same roof with two single men was a real tit-bit for the gossip mongers. She laughed and said she was surprised that two such modern painters should be so conventional. We resented this accusation and told her she was perfectly welcome to stay with us if she really wanted to.

"Well, I will not stay at the rancher's," she said, "but I don't mind staying with the Lawrences if they will invite me. However, I doubt they will take me in. I'll go up and pay them a visit for your sake, and then perhaps they will ask me to stay."

"Don't do it for our sake," we said, "but for your own."

"For yours," she said, and set out for Lawrence's house.

Shortly afterwards, Lawrence came hurriedly down to our cabin. He delved right into the delicate question about Meta.

"This Lehmann woman," he said, "she can't stay with you. Why, it's absurd."

"Well, if she can't stay with us, and she won't stay at the ranch, there is only your place," we answered.

"I won't have her," he retorted most emphatically.

"You must get the Lizzie ready right away and take her down to Taos. You can stay at Ufer's or the Mexican's overnight and come back tomorrow."

"That might be a solution if the snow weren't so deep. We can't possibly make it in the car. If a car could make the trip, she would have had somebody drive her up here, but she walked up and that is the only transportation she can get back. We can't turn her out into the cold night to walk seventeen miles through the dark forest and deep canyons alone, and even if we should escort her, we might all freeze to death."

"But don't you see, she can't stay with you," Lawrence said.

He tried very hard to have us refuse her and so force her to go to the ranch. I cannot exactly remember his words and won't try to invent or recreate them. But he was

greatly concerned for us, like an old aunt for the virginity of her two nieces—concerned for us and for the gossip it would evoke. Perhaps it seems paradoxical that this Lawrence, who wrote about sex and didn't give a hang about gossip, should act like this; and it is likewise surprising that this was the real Lawrence. He was really the purest Puritan at heart.

How utterly false that some papers have called Lawrence "lurid," and a dirty-minded fellow; and someone wrote him personally and called him a mixture of the missing link and the chimpanzee, etc. To this he answered:

"These people think they are being perfectly well bred and perfectly 'right.' They are safe inside the convention, which agrees that we are sexless creatures and social beings merely, cold and bossy and assertive, cowards safe inside a convention.

"Now I am one of the least lurid mortals, and I don't at all mind being likened to a chimpanzee. If there is one thing I don't like it is cheap and promiscuous sex. If there is one thing I insist on it is that sex is a delicate, vulnerable, vital thing that you mustn't fool with. If there is one thing I deplore it is heartless sex. Sex must be a real flow, a real flow of sympathy, generous and warm, and not a trick thing, or a moment's excitation, or a mere bit of bullying.

"And if I write a book about the sex relation of a man and a woman, it is not because I want all men and women to begin having indiscriminate lovers and love affairs, off the reel.

"All this horrid scramble of love affairs and prostitution is only part of the funk, bravado and doing it on purpose. And bravado and doing it on purpose is just as unpleasant and hurtful as repression, just as much a sign of secret fear.

"Accept the sexual, physical being of yourself, and of every other creature. Don't be afraid of it. Don't be afraid of the so-called obscene words. There is nothing wrong with the words, it is your fears that make them bad, your needless fear. It is your fear which cuts you off physically, even from your nearest and dearest. And when men and women are physically cut off, they become at last dangerous,

bullying, cruel. Conquer the fear of sex and restore the natural flow. Restore even the so-called obscene words, which are part of the natural flow. If you don't put back a bit of the old warmth into life, there is savage disaster ahead.

"One must say to oneself—I am not going to be ashamed of my sexual thoughts and desires, they are me myself, they are part of my life. I am going to accept myself sexually as I accept myself mentally and spiritually, and know that I am one time one thing, one time another, but I am always myself. My sex is me as my mind is me, and nobody will make me feel shame about it.

"Sex and beauty are inseparable, like life and consciousness. And the intelligence which goes with sex and beauty, and arises out of sex and beauty, is intuition. The great disaster of our civilization is the morbid hatred of sex. What for example could show a more poisoned hatred of sex than Freudian psycho-analysis, which carries with it a morbid fear of beauty, 'alive' beauty, and which causes the atrophy of our intuitive faculty and our intuitive self.

"The deep psychic disease of modern men and women is the diseased, atrophied condition of the intuitive faculties. There is a whole world of life that we might know and enjoy by intuition, and by intuition alone. This is denied us, because we deny sex and beauty, the sources of the intuitive life and of the insouciance which is so lovely in free animals and plants.

"Sex is the road of which intuition is the foliage and beauty the flower. Why is a woman lovely, if ever, in her twenties? It is the time when sex rises softly to her face, as a rose to the top of a rose bush.

"And the appeal is the appeal of beauty. We deny it where we can. We try to make the beauty as shallow and trashy as possible. But, first and foremost, sex appeal is the appeal of beauty.

"Now beauty is a thing about which we are so uneducated we can hardly speak of it. We try to pretend it is a fixed arrangement: straight nose, large eyes, etc.—which shows we are using the word beautiful all wrong.

Beauty is an experience, nothing else: it is not a fixed pattern or an arrangement of features. It is something felt, a glow or a communicated sense of fineness. What ails us is that our sense of beauty is so bruised and blunted, we miss all the best; even the plainest person can look beautiful, can *be* beautiful. It only needs the fire of sex to rise, delicately to change an ugly face to a lovely one. That is really sex appeal: the communicating of a sense of beauty.

"If only our civilization had taught us how to let sex appeal flow properly and subtly, how to keep the fire of sex clear and alive, flickering or glowing or blazing in all its varying degrees of strength and communication, we might, all of us, have lived all our lives in love, which meant we should be kindled and full of zest in all kinds of ways and for all kinds of things . . . whereas, what a lot of dead ash there is in life now!

"The whole trouble with sex is that we daren't speak of it and think of it naturally. We are not secretly sexual villains. We are not secretly sexually depraved. We are just human beings with living sex. We are all right, if we had not this unaccountable and disastrous fear of sex.

"Everything is worn thin. In the provinces, idealism worn thin: in the towns, the intellectual artiness and nothing-shock-us attitude worn thin. A world where everything is experienced exclusively in the head and talked to pieces there—above all sex, continually, talked scientifically, talked humorously, talked sensibly, talked tolerantly. 'Sex in the head.'"

Was it strange then, that he should act as he did? I don't think so. That was the real Lawrence, deeply concerned about his friends and humanity.

"But," said I, coming back to the present, "can't a woman sleep under the same roof as a man without having sexual relations?"

"Of course!" he agreed, "but people will talk just the same."

"Well, as long as we have a clear conscience," Gótzsche put in, "we don't care what they say. Or if we didn't,

is it anybody's business what relations we have? Gossip will go on in spite of it."

"Look here," I continued to Lawrence. "The woman is here and you refuse to house her. She refuses to go to the rancher. We are certainly not going to turn her out in the cold. She has come to visit us, to talk business about cover designs for her music sheets and to talk about the exhibition she has arranged for us in the Museum at Santa Fé. And so, as she has no other quarters, we shall most certainly put her up for the night, and people can talk their ears off if they like."

This conversation took place in our bedroom-kitchen. We were all three standing in the middle of the room. Lawrence shifted uneasily on his feet. Now and then he would pace the floor a couple of times and again join the group.

"We wouldn't like to hurt you," one of us said to Lawrence. "And after all, we are your guests, so if you think we should let ourselves be bullied by gossip—why—it is up to you."

"Oh, no," he said, "you must decide for yourselves."

He took a hasty look through the window and asked if we had any letters to be sent off. He was going to the mail box. We didn't, and he left.

Shortly after, Meta returned. She told us she had had five o'clock tea with Frieda.

"I was not asked to stay there, so I made it clear that I intended to stay with you. Lawrence disapproved very highly and had left the house very vexed."

We said we knew and that Lawrence had been to see us, but assured her she could stay with us if she wished and not to worry about Lawrence.

"On the contrary," she said, "Lorenzo's conduct amused me very much. Think of it, that Lawrence, of all people, should carry on like that! The dear old puritan!"

At this time of day, we usually aired the cabin by leaving the doors open, while I pottered around, getting wood for the evening, fetching water, etc. Meanwhile, Gótzsche would go for a walk and then come home and prepare

supper. Meta joined Gótzsche for the walk. After supper, we made it as cozy and comfortable for ourselves as we could in the studio. In the fireplace we built a big, roaring fire of huge logs. This lit the room so that no other light was necessary. On the walk, Meta had picked some fresh green branches of cedar and pinon. At intervals she would stick a branch in the fire, light it and then hold it out in the room for a short time, to fill the air with its incense.

Most of the evening, Meta talked about her life among the Indians and Mexicans, about their human values, daily life and customs. She dwelt especially on the Ute or Piute people and gave me a certain dried cactus—a drug to which they ascribed great healing power, and which was much used in their ceremonies. She also taught us to sing some native songs in the Indian tongue. And what would a cozy evening be like without a story or two?

One of the stories Meta told I still remember. I had heard it before and after. It is often related in New Mexico. Charles F. Lummis also includes it in "The Land of Poco Tiempo." It is always emphasized that it is a true story and I cannot deny its identity although it sounds very familiar to me. Similar versions are told in other parts of the world. And perhaps it is because of its universal appeal that it seldom fails to amuse. So, here it is as Lummis tells it:

"Cristobal Nuñez and Transito Baca are two venerable residents of Llanito, brothers-in-law, and equally addicted to legitimately obtained hiccoughs. Having amassed a few round *pesos* by labour at a sheep-shearing, they formed a partnership, bought ten gallons of whisky in Sante Fé, and started over mountainous roads to retail it in outlying *plazas* from a small cart. Each knowing the other's failing, they swore a solemn oath that neither would give the other a drop during the trip; and thus forearmed, they set out. They had spent every cent, save a nickel which Cristobal had accidentally retained.

"*Valgame Dios!*" groaned Cristobal, after they had gone a few miles, 'but it is very long without to drink. For the love of the Virgin, *cuñado*, give me a little to me.'

“‘But how! That thou not rememberest our compromise?’ asked the virtuous Transito.

“Cristobal groaned again, and rode a few miles in silence. Then an idea percolated through his shaggy locks—the nickel in his pocket.

“‘It is truth, *compadre*, that we compromised not to give us not one drop. But of the *to sell* was nothing said. See! That I have *cinco centavos*! Sell me a drinklet to me.’

“‘*Sta bueno!*’ said Transito, pocketing the nickel and pouring his companion a small dose. ‘The saints are witnesses that I kept my oath. I give not, but sell.’

“Everything takes its time in New Mexico, but in half an hour the inspiration got across the wagon to Transito.

“‘*Carrambas!* How buy not *I* a drinklet *tambien*? I have *cinco centavos* now. ‘Sell-me a little to me, *compadre*.’ And Cristobal did so, thereby regaining his nickel.

“‘But wait-me a so-little, and I will buy a drinklet from thee also, that we may drink joined.’

“Back went the nickel to Transito; and in a moment the two old men were clinking glasses mutually ‘*á la vuestra salud, compadre*.’ This seemed more social, till a disturbing thought occurred to Transito.

“‘*Pero hombre!* Thou hast had two drinks, and I only one. Go, sell-me to me another, that we are equals.’

“This logic was not to be gainsaid; and Cristobal doled out the whisky and resumed the nimble coin. Just then a trace broke.

“‘Ill-said horses! And of ill-said fathers and mothers! That now we have to go to camp here. Tomorrow we will fix the harness.’

“But they did not fix it tomorrow, nor the next day, nor the next. They just stayed in camp and attended strictly to business—which was remarkably good. Now Cristobal was merchant, and Transito customer; and now *al contrario*. No one else came along to disturb the routine of trade, until the third day, when a sheepherder found two white-headed men sleeping beside an empty ten-gallon keg. A much-worn nickel lay in one half-closed fist, and the wool-propeller took it along for luck.

“‘And how to you went the journey?’ people asked in Llanito.

“‘*Mala suerte,*’ sighed Cristobal, sadly. ‘We sold all our whisky; but some *ladron* robbed to us asleep of all we had taken in.’”

The time came for us to go to sleep. Gótzsche and I each took a blanket from our beds (and replaced them with our overcoats) and made up a bed on the couch for Meta. Since the door between the two rooms could not be locked, we advised Meta to barricade it so that we couldn’t come in and rape her during the night. She laughed and said we were the ones who had to look out for the lecherous witch. Jokes and wisecracks were flung about in the dark on either side of the door. Outside, in the cold night, the coyotes howled at the moon. The yelping echoed in the mountains and was repeated again and again, travelling as fast as fierce gossip. “Ooh, hoo, hoo, hoo,” said the owl.

Next morning after breakfast, we accompanied Meta for some distance and saw her off on her return to Taos.

A few days later she wrote this letter to us.

“TAOS—N. MEX.,
Jan. 31—23.

For KNUD MERRILD AND KAI GÓTZSCHE.

DEAR BOYS—Why did you not open Ufer’s letter? You might know it was for you. I guess he must have thought I, too, had a cottage up in the hills. I didn’t tell him I was only there for the day.

I did not write before because I have been expecting to hear about the exhibition.

I did so enjoy the walk home—had to walk every step of the way except one-quarter mile when I got on a wood wagon to rest my legs. Reached Taos nearly 7.00 p.m., at hotel. Went straight to bed and felt no ill effect. Scrubbed my studio the next day, so you see it was good for me, as I knew it would be.

I have done some good designs since I came back to go with some Indian legends, I am writing down just as the Indians tell them in their own words. I think you will like the designs—simple but quite strong.

As things are shaping themselves now, I will leave Taos in about a week or ten days. If I cannot manage to take a day to get up to see you before then, I hope you can come down and bring paintings.

The Indian boys will have horses for you to use whenever you come and the corral is at your disposal with barn.

The way things look, I may be away from Taos for three weeks or a month, which I did not expect. I will arrange to leave key so you may use piano if you care to while I am away.

I am sure to see you before I leave—Kind personal regards to the Lawrences. I hope Lawrence got over being miffed at me. I really like *Mrs.* Lawrence very much. I love my hat more each day. Soon I can wear it with my yellow and black coat.

Best wishes to you both for success. Take good care of yourselves.—Sincerely,

META LEHMANN."

A week later we received another letter from her. I quote it here just to show how hard and unselfishly she worked for her friends.

"TAOS,
Feb. 6—23.

MY DEAR MERRILD AND GÓTZSCHE—I enclose letter from museum at Santa Fé. I had Schuster interview them for me as I had forgotten who was in charge of exhibits and didn't wish to show my ignorance. He delayed a little, but as you see, I got immediate response.

Hennings and I will come up soon if weather does not make roads too bad. We are both very busy, but could take a day off if weather permits—anyway, if we do not manage it, I hope you will find some way to get pictures to me by the 15th if possible.

I wrote part of the particulars about you. I will now send the rest to museum librarian so that by the time the pictures arrive, the article for the Sunday edition of Santa Fé paper can be ready to print. I shall try to arrange for a write-up for you in El Palacio, with one good drawing to be reproduced for each of you. I *can*

if you say so. You know advertising doesn't hurt sometimes.¹

Give my kind regards to the Lawrences. Tell them that I have had several letters from Mrs. Witt (I suppose they have too), but the one I received last night stated that they would be here before very long. I am so glad—perhaps Lawrence can now fix a quarrel with Nina—since she has been to Alexander—I hope so—he does love to quarrel, only, like most Englishmen, he won't admit it.

I hope you will come down before I leave—I guess there will be no opportunity to do the sketches of me because it looks as if I will be gone perhaps as long as two months when I do get away, and I hardly see my way to put off going later than two weeks.

If you are not over the rheumatism, Merrill, I am sorry. If it once gets a start, it likes to stay a while. Of course I have found out that it is not necessary to have it myself and I am beginning to think that it is plain stupidity for intelligent people to be ill anyway. I may be incidentally wrong, but I feel sure that I am essentially right. Take care of yourself.—Sincerely,

META LEHMANN."

The letter from Ufer that she speaks of in her first communication is of no importance in this connection. But another one arrived shortly afterwards which might be of some interest, and so I will quote it here. Scotty, of whom he speaks in the letter, is his large airedale dog. He had entrusted him with us while he and Mary (Mrs. Ufer) were in the East.

"1258 NORTH STATE ST.,
CHICAGO, ILL.,
Feb. 16, 1923.

MY DEAR FRIENDS—KNUD MERRILD AND KAI GÓTZSCHE—
Your wonderfully misspelt letter—your courageous one arrived. I kissed Scotty's paw imprint—tell him that and that I love him and think of him much. I am still alone—Mary is still with her brother's family in Minnea-

¹ We had told her we loathed publicity ballyhoo, the ordinary reporter stuff—only just so much blah, blah.

polis, but she writes that she will be with me tomorrow. So I am expecting her.

Tell Scotty that since I have left him—he didn't understand why—tell him only to get him some more bones, so that he could hide them. I have been alone and slept alone. Often I wanted him at the foot-end of my bed—the way he used to steal up there after I was asleep. It is funny how a human can love a dog—an animal—but it is a love.

Your wonderful sketch at the top of the letter—it is really beautiful. I can tell both portraits, but you dated it the 11th of January when it was February. The mountains through the door and window—it is great and I shall keep the letter. Scotty is attentive.

Tell dear old Lawrence, really he is a man, that I wish him so much happiness. I feel that the end of 1922 was really a treat to me and also Mary. To have a man like that drop in on Taos, and become my friend, and with such a fine woman as a wife—and then both of you came. When I am associating with these dried up venired ones, I often think of all of you, and how lucky I am to possess you.

An artist's life is a lucky one, thank God that all of you are artists—only I wish that I were back in Taos, back in the mountains.

Things are yet hard, very hard with me. These venired Americans! But I am gaining. Tell Lawrence that I understand him better and better each day.

Thanks for your congratulations—I did not expect it. It is the highest medal in the Pennsylvania Academy—the oldest Art Institution in America.

I hope that I see all of you again. My love to Lawrence and his wife (a glorious woman) and also to you.—
Sincerely, WALTER UFER."

I have previously spoken of Pips or Bibbles, Lawrence's little black dog, mentioned in his poem, "Blue Jay." And now of Scotty, Ufer's airedale. We ourselves had a cat, a stray wild cat we had taken in. Mire (Meere) was its name. These animals played a great part in our lives up there in the great wilderness. Especially did Pips. So much so that she brought Lawrence to the brink of despair,



D. H. Lawrence and Frieda Lawrence with Pips on the porch,
Del Monte Ranch, 1922-3

which almost resulted in a free-for-all fight between us. Fists were not raised, but it is a wonder it did not end in a physical combat. It was an extreme misfortune, a calamity I shall remember the rest of my life. Lawrence wrote a poem about the dog, calling it "Bibbles," in "Birds, Beasts and Flowers." I will utilize this poem as I go along.

BIBBLES

"Little black dog in New Mexico,
Little black snub-nosed bitch with a showed-out jaw
And a wrinkled reproachful look,
Little black female pup, sort of French bull, they say,
With bits of brindle coming through, like rust, to show you're
not pure;
Not pure, Bibbles,
Bibsey, bat-eared dog;
Not black enough.

First live thing I've 'owned' since the lop-eared rabbits when
I was a lad,
And those over-prolific white mice, and Adolf, and Rex whom
I didn't own.
And even now, Bibbles, little Ma'am, it's you who appropriated
me, not I you.
As Benjamin Franklin appropriating Providence to his
purposes.

Oh Bibbles, black little bitch
I'd never have let you appropriate me had I known.
I never dreamed till now, of the awful time the Lord must
have 'owning' humanity."

The first time I heard the name of this little whimsical dog, it was Pebbles. As I had never heard such a name for a dog before, I asked Lawrence what it meant.

"Oh," he said, "that means little black stone."

"That's a funny name—I don't like that," I said.

"Call her Pips or Pipesey then, as Frieda does," he replied.

Pips was easy and short and very fitting, we thought, and so Gótzsche and I most frequently called her Pips. Mrs. Lawrence preferred Pipesey, and Lawrence favoured Bibbles, although he used all these names and quite often Bambino and Bubastis.

I became acquainted with Pips on one of the first afternoons I was visiting the Lawrences down in Taos. I was sitting on a chair when a door opened at the opposite end of the room. In tripped a little black dog, and when she was barely inside the door she noticed me. Straight as an arrow she pierced through the room and, without hesitation, jumped right into my lap, squirming around and licking my face all over. I couldn't help laughing, the licking of my face tickled and so, very politely, I put her down on the floor. But alas, she jumped right back again and so I now gently pushed the amusing little nuisance down. Persistently she jumped back.

Lawrence called her repeatedly, but she didn't mind him in the least; and while this was going on, he would say, "Oh Bibsey, don't just love everybody—don't bother the man with all your endless love. Get down, you little mugg, you miserable little bitch of lovetricks," Lawrence talking amusingly at first, then slightly irritated by all the wriggling, licking lovegiving to a stranger, when it rightfully belonged to her master alone.

Seeing that she further didn't in the least mind his repeated calling, he finally rushed over to my chair, quite annoyed, picked the dog up, slapping it very gently as he went back to his seat, and placed Pips in his own lap. She had to make up now—she was very eager and licked Lawrence's nose, cheek and beard and, as he turned his head, she licked his ear and neck and Lawrence's anger melted and half-laughingly he continued to scold, pet and talk to Pipsey-Bubustis.

"Oh Bibbles, oh Pips, oh Pipsey
You little black love-bird
DON'T you love EVERYBODY!!!
Just everybody.
You love 'em all.
Believe in the One Identity, don't you,
You little Walt-Whitmanesque bitch?"

Lawrence hated the village of Taos and very seldom went there, but sometimes when he had to go on some necessary errand, he occasionally would take Pips along on the stroll.

When in town, he seemed very self-conscious, walking aloof, dreading the possibilities of meeting someone he might have to talk to and be polite. He could do this wonderfully and be very, very nice until aroused, when he would instantly fire back mercilessly. There was no middle way with Lawrence. He was nice to the plain, everyday people, but the "arty lot" he could not bear; he detested them. Sometimes, when in town, he seemed to me to be like a clam, closed in his own shell, and when he had Pipsey along—well!

"First time I lost you in Taos plaza
And found you after endless chasing,
Came upon you prancing round the corner in exuberant,
bibbling affection
After the black-green skirt of a yellow-green old Mexican
woman
Who hated you, and kept looking round at you and cursing
you in a mutter,
While you pranced and bounced with love of her, you
indiscriminating animal
All your wrinkled MISERERE Chinese black little face beaming
And your black little body bouncing and wriggling
With indiscriminate love, Bibbles;
I had a moment's pure detestation of you
As I rushed like an idiot round the corner after you
Yelling: PIPS! PIPS! BIBBLES!

To picture that certain day in Taos plaza, you must see him walking, delicately putting his feet down one by one, too far behind that fluttering little dog, clad in a grey-black checkered coat, grey, very narrow pants, long cowboy riding-boots with very high heels and a light grey five-gallon hat, so becoming to the mess of a big reddish beard.

Lawrence had so taken to Pips that she had really become part of him and so it was very annoying that he had to call and scold her all the time, as she didn't mind at all and misbehaved so that he finally forgot himself "and rushed like an idiot round the corner, yelling Pips—Pips—Bibbles."

"I've had moments of hatred of you since,
Loving everybody!

'To you, whoever you are, with endless embrace!
That's you Pipsey,
With your imbecile bit of a tail in a love-flutter.
You omnipip.'

Then came the time when we all, Pips included, moved up to the ranch. On our daily walks, Pips would be along if the snow was not too deep. And when Lawrence would come for his afternoon tea almost every day at our cabin, he would often bring Pips along, so she felt we belonged to the family and she had a high regard for us and for our cabin, which she considered her second home.

Pips knew very well that Lawrence was her master and that Mrs. Lawrence, Gótzsche and I belonged to the family in the order mentioned, but she would, like most of her kind, joyfully leap to any stranger to be petted. She had great fun chasing the pigs and cattle at the ranch. When the snow was deep, she jumped like a rabbit. In endless joy she played with anything, biting in the snow in exuberant mirth, tossing small sticks in the air and playing with them like a cat with a mouse.

When Lawrence was having tea at our cabin, Pips would sit in his lap and he would talk to her, the omnipip.

"Not that you're merely a softy, oh dear me, no,
You know which side your bread is buttered.
You don't care a rap for anybody,
But you love lying warm between warm human thighs,
indiscriminate
And you love to make somebody love you indiscriminate
You love to lap up affection, to wallow in it,
And then turn tail to the next comer, for a new dollop,
And start prancing and licking and cuddling again, in-
discriminate
Oh, yes, I know your little game."

Often they would stay till sundown and we would go outside to see the sun set over the mesa, far, far out over the desert. The gorgeously coloured clouds would spread a fantastic pattern over the sky, and the atmosphere would become soft as velvet. Dusk would set in and the coyotes would begin to howl, coming nearer the cabin as darkness approached.

Feeling the wildness of nature, Pips thought she had to protect us, but the coyotes were howling all around us, so she rushed forward and backward in a frenzy, not knowing in which direction to concentrate. Amusing little dragon.

"Yet you're so nice,
So quick, like a little black dragon,
So fierce, when the coyotes howl, barking back like a whole
little lion, and rumbling,
And starting forward in the dusk, with your little black fur
all bristling like plush
Against those coyotes, who would swallow you like an oyster."

In the morning, one of us would fetch the mail and bring it to Lawrence. He would have time for a *tête-à-tête* with Pips on his lap.

"And in the morning, when the bedroom door is opened
Rushing in like a little black whirlwind, leaping straight as an
arrow on the bed at the pillow,
And turning the day suddenly into a black tornado of
JOIE DE VIVRE Chinese dragon.

So funny,
Lobbing wildly through deep snow like a rabbit,
Hurling like a black ball through the snow,
Champing it, tossing a mouthful,
Little black spot in the landscape!

So absurd,
Pelting behind on the dusty trail when the horse sets off home
at a gallop:
Left in the dust behind like a dust-ball tearing along
Coming up on fierce little legs, tearing fast to catch up, a real
little dust-pig, ears almost blown away,
And black eyes bulging bright in a dust-mask
Chinese—dragon—wrinkled, with a pink mouth grinning under
jaw showed out
And white teeth showing in your dragon grin as you race,
you split-face,
Like a trundling projectile, swiftly whirling up,
Cocking your eyes at me as you come alongside, to see if I'm
I on the horse,
And panting with that split grin,
All your game little body dust-smooth like a little pig,
poor Pips.

Plenty of game old spirit in you, Bibbles.
Plenty of game old spunk, little bitch.

How you hate being brushed with the boot-brush to brush all
that dust out of your wrinkled face,
Don't you?
How you hate being made to look undignified, ma'am,
How you hate being laughed at, Miss Superb!

Blackberry face!
Plenty of conceit in you.
Unblemished belief in your own perfection
And utter loveliness, you ugly-mugg;
Chinese puzzle-face
Wrinkled underhung physog that looks as if it had finished
with everything
Through with everything.

Instead of which you sit there and roll your head like a canary.
And show a tiny bunch of white teeth in your underhung
blackness,
Self-conscious little bitch
Aiming again at being loved.

Let the merest scallywag come to the door and you leap your
very dearest love at him
As if now, at last, here was the one you FINALLY loved,
Finally loved;
And even the dirtiest scallywag is taken in
Thinking: THIS DOG SURE HAS TAKEN A FANCY TO ME.

You miserable little bitch of lovetricks,
I know your game.

Me or the Mexican who comes to chop wood
All the same,
All humanity is jam to you."

This loving everybody annoyed Lawrence, but he would
be loving again in turn and forgive and be utter tenderness
to the little rascal, even when she was eating filth and
vomiting in the house. Lawrence would scold, spank, wash
up and forgive.

"Everybody so dear, and yourself so ultra-beloved
That you have to run out at last and eat filth,

Gobble up filth, you horror, swallow utter abomination and
fresh-dropped dung.

You worse than a carrion crow.
Reeking dung-mouth
You love-bird.

REJECT NOTHING, sings Walt Whitman.

So you, you go out at last and eat the unmentionable,
In your appetite for affection.

And then you run in to vomit it in my house!

I get my love back.

And I have to clean up after you, filth which even blind
Nature rejects

From the pit of your stomach;

But you, you snout-face, you reject nothing, you merge so
much in love

You must eat even that."

Lawrence must have scolded and spanked Pips once too often; she wouldn't stand it any more, for one day she came strutting down to our cabin, all alone, with all her love.

We felt there was something wrong and tried to get her to run home, as we knew it would hurt Lawrence to find her with us; but it was of no avail. We took her out for a walk and she followed willingly, but as soon as we turned and proceeded towards Lawrence's cabin, she turned right around and ran back to our house. There was nothing else to do but let her stay till Lawrence would come for tea in the afternoon. When he did come, he was mad at Pips, and she knew it. She jumped to my lap as soon as we sat down for protection.

She would not make up with Lawrence, who was scolding her.

"Then when I skelp you a bit with a juniper twig
You run straight away to live with somebody else,
Fawn before them, and love them as if they were the ones you
had REALLY loved all along.
And they're taken in.
They feel quite tender over you, till you play the same trick
on them, dirty bitch."

Pips would not make up; she was too proud. And Lawrence was too proud to change his attitude or voice.

"I really don't care for the dog—she'd better stay with you," he said.

We did not like the idea and used the stray wildcat we had taken in and adopted as an excuse. It would be a fight all the time. We finally persuaded Lawrence to take Pips home with him, but he had to carry her in his arms. She would not follow him.

The next morning, Pips came back. "By golly, there is Pips again." We looked at one another for a solution. It would hurt Lawrence terribly to find her here again. We felt very sorry about it. We scolded her in a reproachful voice, imitating Lawrence, but couldn't help smiling at her funny ways. Bibsey, you bat-eared dog, black eyes bulging, pink mouth grinning, under jaw showed out, white teeth showing in your dragon-grin, split-face, wrinkle-face, black-berry-face, you ugly mugg, Chinese puzzle-face, wrinkled underhung physog, you snout-face, wrinkled old aunty's face, you nigger, you dirty bitch, bull-bitch, love-bitch. Not that you're merely a softy—oh, dear me, no—plenty of game old spirit in you, Bibbles, plenty of game old spunk, little bitch. With your imbecile bit of a tail in a love-flutter. You omnipip.

When Lawrence came for tea in the afternoon, he was aloof, he didn't talk to Pips, and in a decided voice, tinged with sorrow and disappointment, he gave Pips to us—a present—and in such a way that we did not try to refuse or excuse; but we accepted her unwillingly and silently as he shook his finger at her, saying:

"Fidelity! Loyalty! Attachment!

Oh, these are abstractions to your nasty little belly,
You must always be a-waggle with LOVE.

Such a waggle of love you can hardly distinguish one human
from another.

You love one after another, on one condition, that each one
loves you most.

Democratic little bull-bitch, dirt-eating little swine."

We "owned" Pips for the "first" time. We were not at all taken in by our new gift, and only hoped that Lawrence

soon would take her back. She was also very annoying to MIRE, our wildcat. Although Mire could hold her own and keep Pips at a distance, Mire never knew when Pips would leap at her in a sudden burst of frenzy, whereupon Mire would take refuge on the shoulder of the one of us nearest by, and as it always came on without any warning, it wasn't always pleasant to have the wildcat jump the shoulder, because, however careful, she would sometimes claw our necks in her hurry.

Lawrence came as usual in the afternoon for tea. Pips was not mentioned or talked about, although she would be in the room. She very conceitedly ignored Lawrence.

This relationship went on for several days, but then it happened, to everybody's surprise, one afternoon, we were discussing something. Lawrence's voice must have seemed delighted, for all of a sudden, Pips flew into his lap and licked him all over his face.

That day, at dusk, when Lawrence walked back in the deep snow, coyotes howling, as the last beams of sunlight fluttered on the darkening sky, he carried Pips in his arms in a closing embrace. Two great lovers. We owned Pips no more. We were glad, and so was Mire.

Soon we had another dog in our cabin, but a different dog—big, husky, boyish, playful Scotty, an immense aire-dale. Ufer's "Scotty." The Ufers had left Taos for the East, where Ufer had exhibitions of his paintings, and had trusted Scotty with us while away. We liked Scotty very much; he was a real companion, not like Pipsey, the selfish, love-absorbing toy-dog. Scotty was an almost full-grown pup. He seemed very interested in learning things and we taught him many tricks, even to eating from the same platter as Mire. Neither of them liked this idea very much, and sometimes their nature would break their discipline and peace in an exchange of growls, claws and spit-spatter.

Although they could be on the floor together, with Scotty trained to leave Mire alone, she didn't feel quite safe; so we cleared a shelf on the wall over the door for her. It was some leap first to the back of a chair, or the window-

sill, and then to the shelf over the door, but what a graceful leap, and what ease!

Everyone could now be at peace. Lawrence came as before, often with Pips trotting behind, as she could not keep pace with the long stride of Lawrence, wading in the deep snow.

Pips did not like Scotty nor Mire and was very jealous. She tried to steal our affection, but we ignored her and obstinately kept to our own pets, whereupon she jumped back to the lap of Lawrence, where she would sit erect, disgustedly staring at her competitors, suddenly turning around to Lawrence, giving him some hasty licks on his cheeks, patting her front paws on his chest, and quickly turning back again, staring at those beasts as though saying to Lawrence: "Can't you help me get rid of these awful creatures? I must have all the love."

And Lawrence, laughing, utters: "You look at me for discrimination, don't you? Look up at me with misgiving in your bulging eyes, for you are sensitive. And aren't your feelings violated, you high-bred little love-bitch? Bred in conceit that the world is all for love of you, my bitch, you miserable little bitch of lovetricks. Oh, yes, I know your little game, you self-conscious little dragon with unblemished belief in your own perfection, and utter loveliness, you ugly mugg, Chinese puzzle-face. So absurd, so funny, and yet—yet you're so nice."

Conceited as Pips was, she ceased to attempt to gain our affection and kept closer to Lawrence and it seemed that a closer relation between them was developing, to the content of all concerned.

But unfortunately this didn't last long. A snake came into the Paradise. This snake was in the form of another airedale, the dog of the ranch house. This dog was a very small specimen of its kind. Half-wild, he seemed, from roaming about on the large ranch, he seldom came near anyone of us nor Pips. She seemed beyond his standard of dogs, a pet only, not worthy to play with in the great mountain forest.

By this time Pips came in heat and aroused the sex

power in the ranch dog, who became a persistent nuisance to Pips. As yet, she did not know what it was all about. Lawrence was thoroughly disgusted with the behaviour of the ranch dog, and the interest that gradually became apparent in Pips.

"But now, my lass, you've got your Nemesis on your track
Now you've come sex-alive, and the great ranch dogs are all
after you.

They're after what they can get, and don't you turn tail!
You loved 'em all so much before, didn't you, loved 'em
indiscriminate?

You don't love 'em now.

They want something of you, so you squeak and come pelting
indoors.

Come pelting to me, now the other folk have found you out
and the dogs are after you.

Oh, yes, you're found out. I heard them kick you out of the
ranch house:

GET OUT, YOU LITTLE SOFT FOOL!!

And didn't you turn your eyes up at me then?

And didn't you cringe on the floor like any inkspot!

And crawl away like a black snail!

And doesn't everybody loathe you then!

And aren't your feelings violated, you high-bred little love
bitch!

For you're sensitive,

In many ways very finely bred.

But bred in conceit that the world is all for love

Of you, my bitch: till you get so far you eat filth,

Fool, in spite of your pretty ways, and quaint know-all,
wrinkled old aunty's face."

Lawrence gradually had Pips trained so she would mind fairly well, but now that she had become sex-alive, his control over her was rapidly vanishing, very much to his disgust. Gótsche and I told him to keep Pips inside and only to take her out on a leash, as we otherwise might expect bull-dale pups.

"How perfectly hideous, wouldn't it be awful," Lawrence replied. He was horrified by the possibilities of this thought. Nevertheless, Lawrence thought he mastered Pips and

ignored our advice about the leash; and then one morning he was out on a stroll with Pips. There was the ever-present ranch dog. The temptation became too great for Pipesey, who, despite Lawrence's frantic demands, leapt to her lover and off they went together into the depths of the mountain forest and disappeared.

When Lawrence came down for tea that same afternoon, he was gloomy and brooding and couldn't get Pips and her new relation out of his mind. All afternoon he talked about ill breeding, in Pips and in humans, intermixture of races. "But, then," he said, "she is rather American at that; look at America, she has more black blood in her veins than she likes to admit. Bull-dale pups—no, I really can't bear to think of it. Oh, Bibbles, black little bitch, I'd never have let you appropriate me, had I known. I never dreamed till now of the awful time the Lord must have 'owning' humanity."

Lawrence was grieved, disappointed and horrified; his feelings were immensely deep. Is it possible it was for this little creature? Or was she but the symbol of a world?

I can still see him sitting there on the stool, brooding, his head down between his shoulders, chin resting on his breast, dark, mysterious within himself.

Pips came back at dark and was promptly spanked, how much I don't know, but I fear plenty. The following morning, she forced herself out to freedom and her lover, and disappeared. That day Lawrence did not come for tea and Pips didn't come home. She stayed out all night, for fright or for love, I don't know which. But about noontime the following day she appeared at our cabin.

I will not try to describe the look in her eyes, in that funny wrinkled face, or her behaviour. She was at once contented, frightened, full of love, begging for more, conceited, asking for understanding. Come what will—"It has been done——"

We took her into the house. In the afternoon, Gótzsche and I were sitting in the big room, Gótzsche on a chair, I on the edge of the hearth of the fireplace. Gótzsche had Pips in his lap and was playing with her. Suddenly we

heard rapid footsteps outside. The door was thrown open without a knock or warning and in burst Lawrence, his high rubber boots on, soiling our clean floor. He hesitated for a moment to get his direction and rushed over to Gótzsche's chair. He stopped abruptly, his face pale, eyes on stalks, shivering in rage. He pulled himself erect and burst out in a violent stream of curses, starting: "So there you are you dirty, false little bitch." Like lightning out of a clear sky, he struck the little dog with all his enraged force, so that it hurtled from Gótzsche's lap down on the floor where she landed hard and rolled under the table.

We both rose to our feet. Gótzsche was terribly annoyed, his face was red, his eyes spouting flames, and one could not be in doubt of his feelings or thoughts; his expression was stronger than could be interpreted in words. For a fraction of a moment they faced each other. I should not have been surprised if Gótzsche had struck Lawrence. The moment was intense. Lawrence had his back to me. I could not see his face, but his slim neck above the coat collar was white as a sheet; no, a different white.

They measured one another like a pair of fighting cocks. Lawrence was completely out of his mind, wholly ruled by the dark mysterious forces, giving way to a concentrated fury towards Pips. Suddenly he turned on his heel in the direction where Pips had fallen. Still not a word had been spoken between us. With sudden rapidity he threw himself on the floor like a wild beast jumping at its prey. He landed on his hands and knees on the floor, reaching under the table after the trembling dog. All his attempts to catch the swift little dog failed. Table and chairs were pushed all over the room in the wild hunt, and Pips crawled under the low-legged couch for a seemingly safe place.

But no, Lawrence dropped to his belly on the floor, stretching his arms under the couch, striking or grabbing after Pips. Things had happened with the high speed and fury of a sweeping hurricane. Gótzsche and I had not had time to act; we had not even moved from the very spot where we first stood up. We seemed to be nailed to the floor in indignant surprise. The door was still wide open,

Lawrence was on his belly. Pips, sensing an escape, worked herself over to the far end of the couch and with the speed of a bullet, disappeared through the door opening.

Lawrence got up and went out almost as fast. A silent emptiness fell over the disarranged room. Gótzsche and I tacitly faced each other and simultaneously we went outside. There was Lawrence running after the leaping, jumping dog, working the snow up in a haze. In its eagerness to get away the dog had not followed the hard-trodden path of the trail, but trying to make a short cut, jumped into the high soft snow. She was jumping desperately—like a wounded rabbit—to escape, but Lawrence's long legs were better fitted to wade through the snow and he soon overtook the shivering dog. Desperately he kicked her. Out of breath and near collapse with frenzy, he shrieked: "Go home, you dirty —." In utter fear she yelled but did not move; she lay shivering with her paws in the air. Not obeying orders the devil kicked her again. No result, only a heartrending shriek and she rolled only as far as the power of the kick moved her in the snow. "Don't you hear me, you —," shouted Lawrence. He bent down and grabbed the terrified dog, lifted her in both hands up over his head and hurled her with all his might as far as he could through the air, shouting: "I will teach you."

Struggling fiercely with legs in the air, Pips tried hard to land in a favourable position. When she fell she disappeared in a cloud of snow-dust, drowned. Motionless she stayed where she had fallen. Lawrence came up to her again. In a wild fury he yelled and kicked, grabbed and again threw her into the air, landing her some feet ahead, perhaps on a rock, perhaps in the soft snow.

Now we had had enough. We had gained our composure and ran to the place. Lawrence seemed to be drunk with rage; in devilish delight he worked himself up to a still higher pitch. We stepped in between him and the dog, and in dreadful silence my eyes met Lawrence's. I looked into the deepest, whitest boiling Inferno—a pair of burning piercing eyes of such strength that I saw nothing else, only sensed the bloodless, pale blue-pink lips in a wilderness of

beard. I was exasperated, but composed, and my own eyes, cold as icicles, shot back at his, prepared for all consequences, even to a bodily fight if need be.

The moment was tense with desperate passion; his eyes seemed to yell: "Strike—strike me—if you dare—but you dare not!" "Oh yes, I do," my mind answered his eyes back, "but I have no desire to do so. To save Pips and yourself from further agony is my only aim."—"You dare not strike me!" his eyes challenged again.—"You strike first" my thoughts repeated.

I felt that he craved a fight; that he really desired it; he would madly delight in it. My mind saw him kick, bite and scratch me all over in his intensity. He longed to clasp muscles of steel, to feel the hard powerful blows—to give with all his might and receive and enjoy the pain of a fierce battle. Heated to ecstasy, he longed for the warm bodies to roll and struggle in the icy snow.

It did not attract me. I felt sure, if enraged, I would go berserk, crack his jaw or ribs, or both, with my blows. I realized keenly my trained superior athletic strength against his inferior undeveloped body, and the fight was not in the least tempting; the certainty of victory held no glory. He kept on daring me with his eyes, and I knew the fight was with myself, not to strike despite his taunting challenge. I admired his courage. He was panting for air. The break in his pursuit after the dog had brought him to exhaustion and the edge of a hectic collapse, and still his eyes dared me to strike. I dared my "strike me first" back. Like a couple of sniffing, snarling dogs we held our position, while a dark little spot jumped away in the deep white snow, disappearing in the thick of the forest.

Without a word spoken by either of us through the whole episode, we broke away silently and walked off in opposite directions.

Pips came back to us again that same night. When Lawrence came the next day he did not apologize in words; but he had baked bread and some delicious cake for us and was very, very nice, as was his custom when he knew he had done something he did not approve of himself. "There

is an evil world-soul which at times overpowers one, and one has to struggle against it to keep oneself clear." That Pips was in our cabin, he accepted as a matter of fact, and only said: "Best she stay with you."

We "owned" Pips the "second" time.

Her sex-experience was over and her lover was again rambling the great spaces, leaving Pips to herself. She was a changed dog; she knew her place in our household of pets, and although she got her share, she was a little jealous and not fully contented. As the days passed, she followed us closer to Lawrence's cabin. And then, one morning as I was bringing the mail to Lawrence, she followed me all the way. Did she know?

She followed me into the house, and there—there was Lawrence sitting up in bed, he said, with a slight cold. "But I will be quite all right in a day or two." In wonder he looked at Pips but did not speak to her. His voice in speaking to me must have attracted her, for she suddenly jumped up on the bed as of old and, in her own curious manner, rejoiced in the reunion and reconciliation. Lawrence, sick in bed, seemed greatly pleased and gave in to Pips with little reserve.

"So now, what with great airedale dogs,
And a kick or two,
And a few vomiting bouts,
And a juniper switch,
You look at me for discrimination, don't you?
Look up at me with misgiving in your bulging eyes,
And fear in the smoky whites of your eyes, you nigger;
And you're puzzled,
You think you'd better mind your P's and Q's for a bit,
Your sensitive love-pride being all hurt.

All right, my little bitch.
You learn loyalty rather than loving,
And I'll protect you."

I left the room, leaving Pips on the bed with Lawrence. From now on Pips stayed at Lawrence's cabin. The reunion seemed a happy one.

When I showed this chapter of my manuscript to a well-

known English writer who was at the time in Hollywood, he replied in part . . . "I am probably being thoroughly sentimental about the central incident in your chapter, but I get sick in the stomach at once when I see or read of any cruelty to animals. This is probably illogical because animals are continually cruel to one another and do not much care what happens to men or what happens to dogs. But there it is. If I am sentimental, I am sentimental. For an hour after reading your chapter I hated Lawrence so much that I couldn't bear to think of him. Now this is only being honest and is in all probability an exposure of my own romantic sentimentality. But I can't help it. I think your writing most vivid and the whole chapter makes Lawrence live . . ."

Although I was glad that this very prominent writer praised my work, I could not bear to think that I had made anybody hate Lawrence, even for one hour. I was sufficiently angered at Lawrence myself at the time of the incident, but it had never occurred to me to connect Lawrence with cruelty to animals. Nothing was farther removed from him than that. Although you might describe the incident as such, I hope you agree, that it was not cruelty to animals in the ordinary sense. My critic, who loves animals, as most of us do, I am sure will be the first to acknowledge that. There is, of course, no denial that Lawrence was at the moment cruel to the dog, grossly so. But he was so to us, to his wife, and to everybody for that matter, at times, and mostly so to himself. He could be the very devil. Nevertheless, in spite of this, or because of it, we liked him just the same—the dog episode included. Lawrence loved animals and humanity more passionately than most of us do, and he who loves much shall be forgiven much. You who know him through his books, know how he loved the animal kingdom. And we who were fortunate to know him personally know him as a lover of both Birds and Beasts. Honestly, I don't think there is any reason to try to defend him.

This reminds me of another incident where an animal was the cause of anger. But this time it was Lawrence who

was angered at me. He jumped on me in fury because I shot a rabbit. But let me explain. When we arrived at the ranch in December, we soon found out that fresh meat was scarce and also, in our circumstances, costly. I therefore borrowed a double-barrelled shot-gun to see if I couldn't shoot some game. Everybody approved of my idea. But the first day I had the gun I hunted all day without even a chance to shoot at anything. The following days were not much better, there were no rabbits in sight. Then I discovered that the rabbits, of which there were plenty, were in hiding all day, but towards sundown they would come out into the open. Hence I decided to start out an hour before dusk. And to my pleasant surprise, found there were lots of rabbits, a hunter's El Dorado. In a short time I had shot three of the fleet little animals within the radius of a mile of our cabin. I could have shot more, but I was not just out for killing. I had enough, one for each household and thought the rest of them would keep better alive than dead.

Very proud, I went to the Lawrence's with their share. When I presented a rabbit to them, Lawrence said, "It is very nice of you to think of us, but you must keep it for your own household, you need it more than we do."

"Oh no," I said, "it is for you," and then boasted of my big kill.

"You are quite a *shikari*, aren't you," he said.

"Well, I guess so," I muttered, "only I don't know what a *shikari* is."

"A *shikari*," he said, "is what we call a hunter in India, or a Nimrod if you like that better."

I didn't think I was extraordinary, but ventured to say, "Whenever you want some fresh meat, just tell me and I will get you all you want."

When I handed the rabbit over to Lawrence he said, "Oh, how nice and fat she is, you must come and help us eat it. I will prepare it as Harsenpheffer, jugged hare, you know." And looking at it he continued: "But you have not extracted the entrails."

"What? the entrails?" I questioned him.



Knud Merrild with his first rabbit at Del Monte.
Note Mabel's scarf and cap made by Frieda

"Yes, the guts," he said. "You have not pulled out its guts. Look here," he continued, "whenever you have killed a hare, the first thing you do is to place it on its back. Then take your knife and make a neat little cut in his belly," pointing where to cut, "then you lift him up, turn him around, and out comes the guts by themselves. You see it is a preventive measure, in case a shot should have punctured the intestine it is apt to spoil the meat." He then showed me how to skin it. Lawrence was not a hunter, he wouldn't even touch a gun—a devilish machine, but he knew. He had never shot with a gun in his life, so he thought it was high time to begin. But now he went back on his thoughts. What did he want with guns or revolvers? Nothing. He had nothing to do with them, as he had nothing to do with so much that is in the world of man.

And I said to myself, "I'll be darned, that fellow Lawrence knows everything. I'll bet he knows the names of Confucius' second cousins, and the faithless Clytemnestra's lover, and the Latin names of the wild flowers. He does know how to skin a rabbit."

As time went on, and I shot more and more rabbits for our table, I naturally had to enlarge my hunting radius for a new kill until it encircled Lawrence's house, the ranch and beyond. I now felt as sure of getting a rabbit when I went for it, as of going to the coop and catching a chicken. This fascinated Gótzsche, so much so that he tried himself a couple of times, but had no luck. So one day we decided to go out together at sunset. I told him we would shoot one each before sun was down, one for the Lawrences and one for ourselves.

I asked Gótzsche if he had seen any fresh tracks during the day, if so that is where we were going. He said he had seen tracks around Lawrence's house, so that is where we went. I took the gun to show him how to shoot the first one. Sure enough, when we came up to the house, there jumped a rabbit. I aimed, fired, and the rabbit jumped no more.

Aroused by the shot so near by, Lawrence and Frieda

came running out on the porch. Triumphantly, I held my prey before them.

Lawrence was horrified. My happiness turned into concern. I looked at Lawrence and then at the rabbit and instantly I became aware of the warm blood that was dripping from the nose of the little animal, making red spots on the white snow. Lawrence quivered in rage.

"You brute!" he shot at me. "How dare you shoot my rabbit. How ghastly of you! How dare you shoot in my garden! It's my nice little bunny that nibbled around the house in the morning. How *could* you kill that innocent little animal?" And so he carried on.

I just stood there, with the rabbit in one hand and the gun (the devilish machine) in the other, with my hands full, so to speak, and couldn't get out a word. I felt sorry, of course, but also a bit defiant about being condemned without a trial.

"Lorenzo, Lorenzo," Frieda interrupted his barrage. "Merrild didn't know you were attached to that rabbit or he wouldn't have done it. Further—he doesn't shoot for the sake of killing, but for food."

"One shouldn't kill animals, not even for food," Lawrence replied tauntingly.

"But—Lorenzo," Frieda answered, "we eat bacon, meat and chicken."

"We do," Lawrence repeated hesitantly. "Well——" and with gusto he exclaimed, "one shouldn't eat that either—one shouldn't eat meat at all."

I didn't like the way he bawled me out, but thought it useless to quarrel with him. I was very sorry indeed, to have hurt him by shooting his pet, and said so. But Lawrence didn't cool off that quickly. Despite my assurance he kept on.

"Mankind was beastly, all this horrid killing with damnable firearms, etc." He would (most emphatically) have no more shooting on the ranch.

I didn't like this talking to and was a little hurt. And as we walked towards our cabin, defiantly I said to Gótzsche:

"It gets rather tiresome with Lawrence flying off the

handle like that. Before this, he has gladly eaten all the other rabbits I shot and gave to him—it was quite all right.”

“He will do it again,” Gótzsche interrupted.

“Of course,” I continued, “but now it’s all wrong. Just because his personal fancy gets involved it becomes a transgression.”

“It’s silly,” Gótzsche agreed, “and hence his ‘thou shalt not kill’ commandment, no more shooting on the ranch.”

“Puh—puh,” I uttered in contemptuous disregard and reloaded the empty barrel, and gave the gun to Gótzsche. He too was hurt, on my behalf, and perhaps he had not yet quite forgotten, or gotten over his anger at Lawrence for striking Pips from his lap. Anyhow, he was in absolute accord with me about shooting the first rabbit we came across. It was no more than agreed upon, before another rabbit jumped up right before our feet, running straight ahead on the hard trodden pathway.

We got a little excited and did not stop to reflect, being entirely possessed by the hunting instinct, perhaps one of the deepest instincts in man.

I knew the rabbit wouldn’t change its course, as it couldn’t make the same speed in the soft deep snow as on the path. So I said to Gótzsche, in staccato tones, “Take your time—aim carefully—aim at the top of his ears and you’ll get him.”

Gótzsche followed my advice. Well collected, he calmly aimed at the rabbit which was still running beautifully, straight ahead. He fired—Bang!—the shot rang out like a cannon in the still forest and echoed through the cold frosty twilight air into the mountains. The rabbit rolled over several times with the momentum, made a couple of leaps into the air, quivered, and lay still in the snow, dead. A perfect shot. A little white cloud of gunsmoke drifted overhead as we went to pick up the rabbit. Then we heard a noise. It was Lawrence, who came out on the wooden porch. Although he was not visible, we recognized his footsteps. Now he was running. Hastily Gótzsche grabbed the rabbit and we both fled and disappeared among the pine trees. In the clear air we could hear Lawrence swear

and curse, but he didn't see us. We chuckled like a couple of schoolboys who had played a trick and gotten away with the forbidden fruit. Naughty boys we could be. Dryly Gótzsche ruminated, "Guess we'd better give your rabbit to the rancher as Lawrence has turned vegetarian." I approved with a grin.

Next day Lawrence brought us some bread and cakes. Last night's incident was never spoken of. Some things are best forgotten.

Occasionally when weather did not prohibit, and only if our pantry was empty, or some very necessary errand had to be done, we would all make the trip to Taos in our "Lizzie." I don't think it happened more than twice or, at the most, three times during the whole winter. On one occasion I remember we stayed the night over, for what, I have forgotten. As Lawrence hated hotels and, of course, would not even think of hospitality from Mabel, we all stayed at Nina Witts' place. I have mentioned her before as a multi-million-dollar-society-belle from Buffalo, age unknown, a close friend of Mabel Sterne. She had married a local character in Taos, an elderly saw-mill man named Lee Witt. He was a man of few words who on rare occasions felt he, too, had to put in a word or two, but thereby plainly showing himself not to savvy our lingo. But as a rule he at least had sense enough to shut up. I do not, however, mean to belittle the man, he knew his onions too.

If I remember right, he was at that time sheriff of the town. They said he was a sure shot and that he would go alone into desert or mountains to capture bandits, single-handed. And when they said single-handed, that had a double meaning. The man had but one arm and a stump. The other, I suppose, he had lost in the saw-mill. He was a constant smoker. He would fill his pipe in his pocket, then manipulate the matchbox and get out a match, then place the box under his stump, strike the match and light his pipe.

Once when I was present, he was just about ready to have his pipe lit. Out of courtesy and friendliness to the man, I struck a match and offered it to him. He ignored

me completely, not uttering even a word. So there I stood with my burning match, looking at him while he, in no haste whatsoever, manipulated his own matchbox. I was perplexed, and I was sorry if I unconsciously had embarrassed him. But darn that fellow, he was very consciously embarrassing me, and doubly so, because he saw I had forgotten my lighted match and was now burning my fingers. He just gave me a look of contempt when I shook my fingers in the air. Needless to say, I never offered that guy another match ever.

Lawrence had noticed it. Nothing ever escaped him, it seemed. We talked of it afterwards. Lawrence said it was an inferiority complex that simply had to demonstrate superiority. Those fellows sometimes are so conscious of, and sensitive to their own defects that any kind of courtesy or friendliness embarrasses them.

I said, "If he had only reciprocated something like this—'like to stay in practice, thanks just the same,' or a little something like that."

"Quite," said Lawrence. "It was very crude of him. But poor fellow, he is probably so muddled up in his own personal problems that he doesn't know what to do, or how to behave."

Nina was not the intriguing kind, like her friend Mabel. She was rather passive, but not unkind. Besides having money—some said she was worth a million dollars, others said she had eight millions and others again just said, "That woman has got a lot of money"—it was whispered that she did healing, by the imposition of hands, and that she was so generous as to do it gratis for poor people, and had cured many. What category the cure belonged to I don't know, but then Æsculapius has many disciples.

Nina also wanted to cure Lawrence from his ailments, but he ridiculed her in a joking, friendly way. He did not believe in her theory or methods. But, in the main, the Lawrences rather liked Nina Witt.

So when Mabel stated that Lawrence had done nothing but revile them when he was there, she was just adding to the already long list of Mabelerium overstatements. The

only time I remember having heard Lawrence use strong language against them was one day when he said to me:

"Can you believe it, Nina today prided herself on living on a dollar a day—the two of them."

And he shouted, "Canaille, I say—they are all canaille, these rich Americans sitting on their stinking muck-heaps of money. Your heaps of gold are only so many muck-heaps, America, and will remain so till you become a reality to yourselves."

I do not know how the feeling was between the two women friends, Nina and Mabel, after Lawrence had thrown Mabel off and then accepted the hospitality of Nina. But it doesn't matter.

Now we were visiting Taos, and some of the talk was about the Indians. I recall from Lawrence:

"Supposing an Indian loves a white woman, and lives with her. He will probably be very proud of it, for he will be a big man among his own people, especially if the white mistress has money. He will never get over the feeling of pride at dining in a white dining-room and smoking in a white drawing-room. But at the same time he will subtly jeer at his white mistress, try to destroy her white pride. He will submit to her, if he is forced to, with a kind of false, unwilling childishness, and even love her with the same childlike gentleness, sometimes beautiful. But at the bottom of his heart he is gibing, gibing, gibing at her. Not only is it the sex resistance, but the race resistance as well.

"The Red man and the White man are not blood-brothers: even when they are most friendly. When they are most friendly, it is as a rule the one betraying his race-spirit to the other.

"In the White man—rather highbrow—who 'loves' the Indian, one feels the White man betraying his own race. There is something unproud, underhand in it. Renegade. The same with the Americanized Indian who believes absolutely in the White mode. It is a betrayal. Renegade again.

"In the actual flesh, it seems to me the White man and the Red man cause a feeling of oppression, the one to the

other, no matter what the goodwill. The Red life flows in a different direction from the White life. You can't make two streams that flow in opposite directions meet and mingle soothingly.

"The bulk of the White people who live in contact with the Indians today would like to see this Red brother exterminated; not only for the sake of grabbing his land, but because of the silent, invisible, but deadly hostility between the spirit of the two races.

"It seems there can be no fusion in the flesh. But the spirit can change. The White man's spirit can never become as the Red man's spirit. It doesn't want to. But it can cease to be the opposite and the negative of the Red man's spirit. It can open out a new great area of consciousness, in which there is room for the red spirit too."

When Lawrence was on a trip of this kind, away from his own domain, outside of his shell, so to speak, he was a little preoccupied and also on the watch and a bit fussy. Or speaking more broadly, a bit restless. The house he would happen to be in, he would in the morning start to clean from one end to the other whether it needed it or not. He would also relieve the housewife of all cooking, assisted by Gótzsche, leaving her in the drawing-room to chat with Frieda.

After meals he would go with me to the kitchen to clean the dishes. He would wash and I would dry or vice versa. I clearly see him before me, washing plates, cups, etc., and hear him say:

"The cultured, highly-conscious person of today loathes any form of physical, menial work, such as washing dishes or sweeping a floor or chopping wood. This menial work is an insult to the spirit. When I see men carrying heavy loads, doing brutal work, it always makes me want to cry, said a beautiful, cultured woman to me.

"When you say that, it makes me want to beat you," said I, in reply. "When I see you with your beautiful head pondering heavy thoughts, I just want to hit you. It outrages me."

And he continued: "There is a basic hostility in all of

us between the physical and the mental, the blood and the spirit. The mind is 'ashamed' of the blood. And the blood is destroyed by the mind, actually. Hence pale-faces.

"In America nobody does anything from the blood. Always from the nerves, if not from the mind. The blood is chemically reduced by the nerves, in American activity. Americans, when they are *doing* things, never seem really to be doing them. They are 'busy' about it. They are always 'busy' about something. But truly *immersed* in *doing* something, with the deep blood-consciousness active, that they never are."

He had now finished washing the chinaware and started on the pots and pans, and went on talking.

"White Americans do try hard to intellectualize themselves. Especially these white women Americans."

His eyes made a descriptive movement, and he continued:

"And the latest stunt is this 'savage' stunt again. White savages, with motor-cars, telephones, incomes and ideals! Savages, fast inside the machine: yet savage enough, ye gods!

"And all this mechanizing has been for the purpose of overthrowing the past. And now look at America, tangled in her own barbed wire, and mastered by her own machines. Absolutely got down by her own barbed wire of shalt-nots, and shut up fast in her own 'productive' machines like millions of squirrels running in millions of cages. It is just a farce."

His talk was broken, because he had to concentrate on scrubbing on a scorched pan. He leaned forward and put all his power behind his efforts. He made a pause, and stood erect, straightened out his back for a moment and said:

"Men are only free when they are obeying some deep inward voice of religious belief. Obeying from within. Men are free when they belong to a living, organic, believing community, active in fulfilling some unfulfilled, perhaps unrealized, purpose.

"Caramba, Kasserolle," he broke out, working vigorously at the saucepan. And I said to myself, "It's a good thing American ingenuity and machines have made steel wool if for

nothing else than to make it possible for Lorenzo, even with lots of muscle-grease, to clean a saucepan."

I had often taken him up when he lambasted the machine and instead blamed man. And at the instant man would get it too. So there. Once he uttered from nowhere, with great passion, "Let us smash something. Ourselves included. But the machine above all."

I did not always comment or join him in an argument, but simply remained an attentive listener to a one-man conversation, letting Lawrence continue and develop his own thoughts. And he said:

"How can any man be free without a soul of his own, that he believes in, and won't sell at any price?"

That struck me square between the eyes. My mood was at the time in that direction and receptive, and my thoughts went on. I was so absorbed by the simple truth that I was not aware of anything else he might have said. Only my eyes saw he was putting china and glass in the cupboards, and pots and pans on their shelf. Then he scrubbed the drainboard, cleaned the dish receptacle and hung it on its nail. Finally he washed his hands, and then, while drying himself with the towel, his eyes met mine, and I came to myself as he said, "The human soul must suffer its own disintegration, consciously, if ever it is to survive."

He spread out the towel to dry for the morning, and so, his work done, he went to join the others in the living-room.

He had struck another of those reflective blows that makes one ponder, and I found myself mechanically putting spoons, knives and forks in their drawers, repeating to myself, "The soul must suffer its own disintegration, consciously, if it is to survive."

I swept the kitchen floor before I joined the others for the evening. When I sat down and lit my pipe I was not surprised to find that the women had led Lawrence on to the topic of marriage.

"Marriage is the great puzzle of our day," he said. "It is our sphinx-riddle. Solve it, or be torn to bits, is the decree.

"We marry from the known self, taking the woman as an extension of our knowledge—an extension of our known self. And then, almost invariably, comes the jolt and crucifixion. The woman of the known self is fair and lovely. But the woman of the dark blood looks to man, most malignant and horrific. In the same way, the man of the courtship days leaves nothing to be desired. But the husband, horrified by the serpent-advised Eve of the blood, obtuse and arrogant in his Adam obstinacy, is an enemy, pure and simple.

"Men marry and commit all their adulteries from the head. All that happens to them—all their reactions, all their experiences—happen only in the head. To the unknown man in them, nothing happens.

"All the suffering today is psychic, it happens in the mind. The red Adam only suffers the slow torture of compression and derangement. A man's wife is a mental thing, a known thing to him. The old Adam in him never sees her. She is just a thing of his own conscious ego. And not for a moment does he risk himself under the strange, snake-infected bushes of her extraordinary Paradise. Solve the puzzle. The quickest way is for the wife to smother the serpent-advised Eve which is in her, and for the man to talk himself out of his old arrogant Adam. Then they make a fair and above-board combination, called a successful marriage.

"But Nemesis is on our track. The husband forfeits his arrogance; the wife has her children and her way to herself. But lo, the son of one woman is husband to the woman of the next generation. And oh, woman beware the mother's boy! Or else the wife forfeits the old serpent-advised Eve from her nature, and becomes the instrument of the man. And then, oh, young husband of the next generation, prepare for the daughter's revenge!

"What's to be done?

"The thought-adventure! We've got to take ourselves as we are, not as we know ourselves to be. I am the son of the old red-earth Adam, with a black touchstone at the centre of me. And all the fair words in the world will fail to alter it. Woman is the strange, serpent-communing Eve,

inalterable. We are one strange pair, who meet, but never mingle.

"When man and woman actually meet, there is always terrible risk to both of them. Risk for her, lest her womanhood be damaged by the hard, dark stone which is unchangeable in his soul.

"Risk for him, lest the serpent drag him down, coiled round his neck and kissing him with poison.

"There is always risk, for him and for her. Take the risk. Make the adventure, suffer and enjoy the change in the blood. And if you are a man, slowly, slowly make the great experience of realizing. The final adventure and experience of realization, if you are a man. Fully conscious realization.

"If you are a woman, the strange, slumbrous, serpentine realization which knows without thinking."

The next morning we left Taos for the ranch. And when Lawrence entered "Lizzie" he couldn't help express his customary hate for automobiles.

"The nasty, unintelligent, unreliable things." Seated, he said, "I am glad we are leaving, I can't bear this town with its dreadful sub-artty people.

"I feel so hopeless about the public. Not that I care about them. I want to live my life and say my say, and the public can die its own death in its own way, just as it likes."

The sun was shining, the air was clear, and, last but not least, Lizzie was hitting on all fours as we rolled bumpily over the frozen road, past the pueblo, below the Sangre de Cristo mountains. Whenever I was out of doors, I always felt like giving our ode to Mother Nature—she is so grand in New Mexico—the sun, the air, the landscape. Although I feel it is impossible to describe it, ever so often I make feeble attempts, but for a change I will quote Lummis:

"The abrupt mountains, the echoing, rock-walled cañons, the sunburnt mesas, the streams bankrupt by their own Shylock sands, the gaunt, brown, treeless plains, the ardent sky, all harmonize with unearthly unanimity.

"'Picturesque' is a tame word for it. It is a picture,

a romance, a dream, all in one. It is our one corner that is the sun's very own. Here he has had his way, and no discrepancy mars his work. It is a land of quaint, swart faces, of Oriental dress and unspelled speech; a land where distance is lost, and the eye is a liar; a land of ineffable lights and sudden shadows; of polytheism and superstition, where the rattlesnake is a demi-god, and the cigarette a means of grace, and where Christians mangle and crucify themselves—the heart of Africa beating against the ribs of the Rockies. . . .

“Description of the atmospheric effects of the South-west is the most hopeless wall against which language ever battled its ineffectual head. ‘The light that never was on sea or land’ spends itself upon the adobe and the chapparo. Under that ineffable alchemy of the sky, mud turns ethereal, and the desert is a revelation. It is Egypt, with every rock a sphinx, every peak a pyramid.”

Every bump in the road became a pyramid too, under the tires of Lizzie, but never mind, we nearly always sang when we were out driving. Whether it be the grandeur of nature, the endlessness of desert panorama, the sunshine, the mountain air or the rattling of our old motor tin-can, we felt elated, and sang as heartily as any bathtub-singer in the cities:

“Au jardin de mon père,
Les lauriers sont fleuris;
Au jardin de mon père,
Les lauriers son fleuris;
Tous les oiseaux du monde
Vont y faire leurs nids . . .
Auprès de ma blonde,
Qu'il fait bon, fait bon, fait bon,
Auprès de ma blonde,
Qu'il fait bon dormir!”

We would sing the same tune over and over again. Twenty times, thirty or more, and perhaps change to “Malbrook S'en va-t-en guerre,” and keep on endlessly.

We stopped on our way at Arroyo Hondo, a Mexican village, to complete our shopping. There were certain

things we could just as well buy there, and Lawrence liked to shop with the simple Mexicans. And perhaps he also wanted to practise on his Spanish. We knew enough to know that he spoke French, Italian and German well, but we had our doubts about his Spanish, although we didn't speak it ourselves. But the Mexicans had quite a time trying to understand him. We got quite a kick out of Lawrence, because it seemed that it didn't occur to him that he himself was erroneous.

The greeting "Como esta Usted," and the reply "Estoy muy bueno" we all mastered, and also the pointing at things with a finger, asking "Cuanto cuesta este cosa?" (How much does the thing cost?), or "Como se llama este?" (What is this called?). But in most cases when we talked, our reply was simply "No le comprendo a Usted," or simpler still "No savvy."

When Lawrence talked with a Mexican and was not understood he would, with infinite patience, repeat and repeat his sentence and perhaps change the accent, but the Mexican would shake his head and utter his "Me no savvy." But Lawrence would doggedly keep on, like a teacher who tries to impart his knowledge to a pupil. He did not suspect himself of being wrong (maybe he wasn't)—only the poor Mexican didn't understand. I must admit, however, that Lawrence improved rapidly; he was quick to learn.

Despite our ignorance of Spanish in the beginning, we nevertheless always managed to get what we set out to buy, one way or the other—either by way of speech, pointing, or by signs, or, if that failed, either Gótzsche or I would draw an illustration on a piece of paper of what we wanted. This way of communication never failed to please the clerk or store-keeper. A sigh of relief and a smile would always come forth. The Mexicans were quick to grasp our illustration—or can it be that our drawings were infallible, or both perhaps?—then we share the honours.

While we are on shopping, I will relate an incident that happened, only once. We had all been to the hot springs and were on our way back to the ranch when we stopped in the Mexican village for victualling. Lawrence, as a rule,

was the buyer, and when he had purchased what he thought was needed for the two households he asked Gótzsche and me if we needed anything else and we said No. We hated to state our needs; we knew Lawrence had so little money. And as we always had enough bread, lard and potatoes, and furthermore could always shoot a rabbit, we would rather just eat that, even if tiresome, than ask for more. But that day Frieda intervened and said we needed this and that.

"But, Frieda," Lawrence said, "I have bought the same for the Danes as for ourselves."

"Lorenzo," she answered him, "the Danes are of huskier build and do heavier work than you. They need more than we do."

Immediately Lawrence wanted to buy out the whole store for us. We assured him that the supply he had already bought us was more than ample and said that Frieda was just like most mothers, always afraid their children hadn't had enough to eat.

"Now don't you be so timid and modest," Frieda said to us, and to Lawrence, "I snooped in their pantry before we left and know it is empty."

Despite our assurances that we had plenty, Lawrence bought a large quantity of food.

Now don't for a moment think that Lawrence was stingy, most emphatically he was not. The contrary, he was very generous. Furthermore, he didn't even believe in property or property rights. When there was any talk of money—the money he, or rather they, had—he always said *our* money, including Gótzsche and me. He didn't regard the money he possessed as belonging to himself alone. He merely considered himself the manager. He had thrown his lot in with us, and as long as we were together—and beyond—it held true.

I always, even after our ways parted—he living in Europe and I here—had the feeling that if worse should come to worse, I would always have a true friend in Lawrence; he would be more than a bank account, always glad to help, financially or otherwise.

Frieda was perhaps more freely generous than Lawrence.

She was at times overwhelmingly generous, generous unto wastefulness, if I may say so. Lawrence hated waste in anything, it was against his very nature or upbringing. I think perhaps I may call him a Puritan in that, as in many other ways. Therefore I would rather bank on him than on Frieda. Frieda was overflowing in nature and good humour. She would gladly give almost anything away, until she had nothing. Lawrence would economize and always have something. As he has said, "There is something rather mean about saving money. But still more fatal is the disaster of having no money at all, when you need it."

I do not, however, want to make any distinction between them. They were both very generous, each in accordance with their respective natures.

Horace Gregory has said, "We are all too likely to forget the solid, practical side of Lawrence's character, his direct way of meeting a personal economic situation—there was to be no extravagance, no waste. His personal economies resembled those of an honest day-labourer—a little money was quite enough, and that little enough to insure personal liberty, but no more. He did not want the popularity that would bring him money, for he had reduced his scale of living down to the level where a very small balance in the bank would give him the necessary security, a security that he guarded with the shrewdness that was a part of his equipment from the class into which he was born."

Frieda was the mediator and her intervention was, as a rule, appreciated. Only once she interfered and I regretted it. If she hadn't I might have spoken a bit of Spanish today. It was like this:

Lawrence's pet idea was to start a kind of new life in the temperate zone of old Mexico. He didn't speak of forming a colony. Just himself and Frieda, Gótzsche and I, and perhaps a few more friends. Some time in the spring it was decided that he and Frieda should go to Mexico and look around for a suitable place where his idea could be carried through. Then they would let us know, and we were supposed to join them.

With this in view, Lawrence wanted to teach us Spanish. And he did it to Frieda's teasing amusement.

Well, it was all right to learn another language, but we felt we needed some more schooling in English and had often asked Lawrence to teach us, but he wouldn't. We asked him to correct us when we made grammatical, or any, errors, also in pronunciation. But he said we spoke all right. He never, or at least very seldom, corrected us. Why, I don't quite know. I only know we were far from being perfect. Who knows, perhaps he really liked the way we talked. Sometimes it can have a certain charm when a foreigner speaks another language. Or was he afraid, perhaps, that repeated correction would be considered nagging and tiresome and develop friction? I remember only once he did it. Slightly irritated, he said to me, "Don't say 'theater' like the Americans. Say 'théâtre' the English way."

I was so surprised that I remember even the spot where we were out walking, when he said it. I thanked him and asked him to keep it up, but I don't remember any other time that he made any correction.

He was, however, always very willing to help us when we asked him for information about grammar, pronunciation or to enrich our vocabulary. I remember an incident that amused him, and he couldn't quite give me an answer that satisfied me.

I said to him, "Why is it you always say *he* or *she* about things? In Danish we always say *it is* in the third person about animals, flowers and things, and only *he* or *she* about humans, as a rule. Only farmers and seafaring people talk like you.

"You might say *she* about the sun, *he* about the moon, *she* about the ocean, *he* about the mountain and so on. I can't figure out when to say *he* or *she*. Whether the wind is a *he* or the fire a *she* is a puzzle to me."

"In English we really have no rule," Lawrence said. "You can please yourself about it, as you like."

So I asked, "Can I say *he* about the horse and *she* about the cow, *he* about the dog and *she* about the cat?"

"Yes, perfectly so," he answered.

I pondered a little and then I shot at him: "Well, if the horse is a mare and the dog is a bitch, I can't say *he*."

Lawrence laughed and said, "Then say *she*."

I told him I thought English was old-fashioned and that Danish was better, at least it was consistent in its grammar.

I had several other quarrels with the English language and Lawrence, but it was the Spanish I wanted to tell about. Lawrence gave us lessons from a Spanish class-book, but as he only had the one, he wrote the lessons down for us to memorize for our next lesson. I have found among my drawings from that time, the first lesson-sheet. It starts like this:

Soy—I *am*.

Estoy hombre—I *am a man*.

Soy Dinamarquis—I *am Danish, etc.*

Lawrence was a very zealous teacher and also quite patient. We had our lessons at his house. One day we came to him for our lesson, one of the first—we had so far only had a few. Frieda sat by the window, knitting, and we, Gótzsche and I, on one side of the table. Lawrence, the schoolmaster, on the opposite. The lesson went on:

Como se llama usted?—*How are you called?*

Ella tiene un perro—*She has a dog.*

La cosa tiene un balcon—*The house has a balcony.*

Frieda broke in saying, "Lorenzo, I think you are awfully old-fashioned as a teacher. You remind me of my own schooldays. I think it is stupid in one of the first lessons to teach—la cosa tiene un balcon. Be up to date and teach necessary daily glossary. For instance, railroad station, street, hotel, store and so on."

"You mind your knitting, Frieda," Lawrence replied, "and don't disturb us."

We continued our lesson:

Yo tengo un libro—I *have a book.*

Habla usted inglas?—*Do you speak English?*

Lo comprendo mejor que hablo—I *understand it better than I speak it.*

Frieda was attentive, and when we came to "*mi tia tiene un pajarito—my aunt has a bird,*" she broke out in a hearty laugh. That was a little too silly for her and she teased Lawrence for lack of imagination and modern method of teaching language.

"Whenever will the Danes ever have to say '*mi tia tiene un pajarito*'? Maybe they don't have an aunt that has a bird, or have you?" she asked us.

We confessed to having several aunts, but didn't remember them having any birds.

"You see, Lorenzo, they don't even have an aunt who has a bird, and if they had, who cares? But they will some day have to ask for a hotel, street number and many other daily questions."

It annoyed Lawrence, and to a certain degree, lessened our interest and destroyed the meagre regard we had for Lawrence as an authority on Spanish. I must admit, however, that it wasn't as silly as it perhaps sounds, nor do I want to ridicule Lawrence. The sentences were chosen for their grammar and similarity of words. But nevertheless, from then on our lessons became fewer and farther apart and our interest diminished to such a degree that the lessons finally came to an end. Most of our Spanish has now been forgotten. But "*mi tia tiene un pajarito*" is remembered to this very day. Also, it is probably remembered because it has another connection.

I wrote at the time in a letter to a Danish artist friend something like this:

"Lawrence today confided a secret to me—'*mi tia tiene un pajarito.*'"

This friend of mine did not know Spanish so his curiosity was aroused, and after pondering a couple of days over what this secret could be, he could stand it no longer, he simply had to know, and so he went to an authorized translator with my letter to find out the secret: "*my aunt has a bird.*"

"And did my face get red," he wrote me. He was a good sport. I wrote and told him, to his amusement, how "*mi tia tiene un pajarito*" had come about.

The long winter evenings did not bother Gótzsche and me. We did not feel we had to kill time. We looked forward to each day and each evening, we had always enough to interest us. The day took care of itself, and in the evening there was letter-writing to do, books to read, drawings or sketching for new pictures, or designs to do. Then we could always play our instruments together. And if nothing else, we could discuss the many problems that Lawrence had touched upon during the day, or we could discuss Lawrence, "the complex," himself. We were never bored.

On the contrary, I don't think the Lawrences passed the winter evenings with the same ease we did, or they shouldn't have asked us to "come up" as frequently as they did. Sometimes we even declined because we had work to do. We also told them not to invite us for fear that we were lonesome, and that we always had something to do, but that we would be glad to come when we felt like it or when they felt like having company.

One day in conversing we happened to talk about chess and it was discovered that Lawrence and I both played. We both excused ourselves for not being experts and said we hadn't played in a long time, but nevertheless it was agreed we should have a game that evening.

Lawrence was not a good chess player; he was too erratic.

It amused me, in one of his books to come across a description of two chess players, because one of them is so unmistakably Lawrence himself. The other player is not I, because the book was written just previous to my acquaintance with Lawrence. I will freely use Lawrence's own description, because I think it is quite fitting, and put Lawrence's name in place of the fictitious one.

"They played chess together now and then, a wild and haphazard game. Lawrence invented quite brilliant attacks, and rushed in recklessly, occasionally wiping Jack off the board in a quarter of an hour. But he was very careless of his defence. The other man played at this. To give Jack justice, he was more accustomed to draughts (checkers we call it in America) than to chess, and Lawrence had never played draughts, not to remember. So Jack played a

draughts game, aiming at seizing odd pieces. It wasn't Lawrence's idea of chess, so he wouldn't take the trouble to defend himself. His men fell to this ambush, and he lost the game. Because at the end, when he had only one or two pieces to attack, Jack was very clever at cornering, having the draughts move off by heart.

"'But it isn't chess!' protested Lawrence.

"'You've lost, haven't you,' said Jack.

"'Yes. And I shall always lose that way. I can't piggle with those draughtsmen dodges.'

"'Ah, well, if I can win that way, I have to do it. I don't know the game as well as you do,' said Jack. And there was quite a sense of victory—'done you down,' in his tone.

"Lawrence required all his dignity not to become angry. But he shrugged his shoulders.

"Sometimes, too, if he suggested a game, Jack would object that he had something he must do. Lawrence took the slight rebuff without troubling. Then an hour or an hour and a half later, Jack would come tapping at the door, and would enter saying:

"'Well, if you are ready for a game.' And Lawrence would unsuspectingly acquiesce. But on these occasions Jack had been silently, secretly accumulating his forces; there was a silence, almost a stealth in his game. And at the same time his bearing was soft, as it were, submissive, and Lawrence was put quite off his guard. He began to play with his usual freedom. And then Jack wiped the floor with Lawrence: simply wiped the floor with him, and left him gasping. One, two, three games—it was the same every time.

"'But I can't see the board,' cried Lawrence, startled. 'I can hardly distinguish black from white.'

"He was really distressed. It was true what he said. He was as if stupefied, as if some drug had been injected straight into his brain. For his life he could not gather his consciousness together—not till he realized the state he was in. And then he refused to try. Jack gave a quiet little laugh. There was on his face a subtle little smile of satisfaction.

He had done his high-flying opponent down. He was the better man.

"After the first evening that this had taken place, Lawrence was much more wary of Jack, much less ready to open towards him than he had been. He never again invited Jack to a game of chess. And when Jack suggested a game, Lawrence played, but coldly, without the recklessness and the laughter which were the chief charm of his game. And Jack was once more snubbed, put back into second place. Then once he was reduced, Lawrence began to relent, and the old guerilla warfare started again."

How I can see Lawrence play. He has described himself very well. Only I disagree. He did not make brilliant attacks, but bluffing, reckless attacks without bothering about his defence. It always costs something to underestimate your opponent.

Now you can see Lawrence sitting down at the table for a game and both of us excusing ourselves.

I said to myself, "On your guard, my boy, you are going to play a master mind—concentrate to win, or lose with honour."

The game started, Lawrence didn't hesitate but moved quickly and with brisk movements. I worked slowly but decisively. I concentrated until my head ached. I could not see the strategy of Lawrence's bold attacks, so I was content to reinforce my defence and for the time being play on that alone. However, as the game went on it became obvious that Lawrence had no defence whatsoever. But I did not relax for fear it might be a trap he had set, and so, slowly, I was satisfied to slay his attackers one by one till he had only a few left while I had almost my force intact. It became only a matter of choice as to how long the game should last, and I was by then absolutely determined not to lose, but win. I started slowly to ring him in and deliver the strangulating move and, finally, I mated him.

What a release! I was rather proud of myself. He wasn't such a superman after all.

Lawrence lost regularly and decisively. But he only admitted it with a multitude of excuses.

Gótzsche and I teased him a little, and Frieda called him a bad loser. I have a vague remembrance of a rematch where I let him win or made a draw, but it doesn't matter. We never played another game after that first evening. We couldn't make him do it.

I later offered him a rematch for revenge, but he wouldn't accept it. Was he afraid of the risk of a double defeat? I don't know, but we never played another game.

Games or play should be a relaxation, he said. Chess was too much concentration, too much scheming and Lawrence hated scheming of any sort.

Our life was primitive, and so was our bodily care. I have told how we took a rubdown with snow when water was scarce. I did not shave and grew a beard like Chief Justice Hughes, and Gótzsche was satisfied with a generous moustache. At times our hair grew too long and needed trimming. But Frieda's scissors were a good remedy for that in the hands of Lawrence or Gótzsche. Lawrence just loved to cut our hair. I can clearly see him with one of Frieda's aprons on, a pair of old glasses on the tip of his nose, combing and cutting away at Gótzsche's hair. He was very conscientious and serious about doing a good job. And I must admit he gave us a fine haircut. Gótzsche in turn cut Lawrence's hair, to the approval of us all.

Our beloved semi-monthly bath at the hot springs was not always easy to fulfil on account of the weather, the road, or Lizzie or something else. One evening it was decided that we should all go to the spring the next morning. And as the horse-riding was too strenuous for Frieda we should try to make it in the car. It was decided to be ready to start at nine o'clock. It sounds easy, but you don't know Lizzie. It meant that Gótzsche and I had to get up at seven in the morning, while it was still dark—and what cold mornings! We had to build a fire on the stove, prepare and eat breakfast, and then the slow process of melting snow on the stove to get hot water for Lizzie or she wouldn't start. But that was not all. Before we would even attempt to get her started we had to make many preparations.

We disconnected and unscrewed all the spark-plugs and poured a "snaps" of gasoline into each cylinder. We then replaced the plugs. We also jacked up one of the rear wheels, and then put her in high gear. And finally we would pour the costly hot water in the radiator and she would be ready to begin to be started. By that I mean we could begin to crank her, for temperamental as she was, she might, after repeated attempts, just sputter a couple of times through her exhaust and then remain silent. She would kick back like a mule, and be as stubborn. We would pull her tickling wire till she cried—her carburettor floating over. Up and down we would swear, and we would sweat, and in the frosty air our breath would float like steam, like a prayer to the god of mechanism.

This particular morning we had had a hell of a time getting her started, but we finally succeeded. Near exhaustion we both climbed in on the front seat for a well-deserved rest, while we let the motor idle and warm up.

We were ready to go when Lawrence appeared, alone, and without an overcoat or bag.

He said that Frieda didn't feel so good and that he, too, would rather stay home, that the weather didn't look so good, that we might risk getting caught in a snowstorm, and that we better wait a couple of days. Would we mind?

Oh, no, we wouldn't mind. Gótzsche turned off the motor and I drained the radiator of its costly water into a bucket. Lawrence went back home.

I must admit, however, that it was a tremendous disappointment. Being roused at seven of a cold morning, the strenuous work with the car and the postponement of the trip were all pretty hard to take without a grumble. But, then, what's the use of crying over spilt milk?

When I saw Frieda the next day she said she was sorry that she had been unable to go, but she had told Lawrence to go with us anyhow. But he just hadn't felt like going.

"And all the trouble you must have had with that awful Lizzie," she said, "and the expectation of going—I am so sorry."

"Oh, well, it's all in the game," said I. "Don't be sorry about it."

"Oh, but what a shame! But you know by now he's the most undependable creature on earth. I wish you'd be angry with him. It's no good what I say."

"No," I said. "I'm not angry with him."

"But you should be," cried Frieda. "It would be good for him."

"Let's forget it," I concluded, "we will go some other time!"

A few days later we decided to go again, but as snow had fallen in the meantime, it was useless to try Lizzie, so we men decided to go alone on horseback as we had done before, and off we went. And, as always, when we were on horseback in that vigorous air and country, we would sing, sing to our hearts' content, that favourite horseback song of ours:

THE ELEPHANT BATTERY

"I love to see the Sepoy, and to hear his martial tread;
And the sound of cavalry galloping goes thro' and thro'
my head;
But sweeter than the sweetest music band has ever played,
Is the ringing tramp of the buffalo as he's going to parade.

Aya, aya, aya, aya, twist their tails and go!
Hathi, hathi, hathi, hathi, oont, and buffalo!
Aya, chel, chel, chel, chel, chel, chel, aya bhai chelo!
Oh, that's the way we shout all day as we drive the
buffalo!

I love to see the hathis with their trunks all in a row;
I love to see the haughty and high-stepping buffalo;
It's sweet to see the sergeants on their dashing kangaroos,
As they gallop past the general and the ladies at reviews.

Aya, aya, etc."

Lawrence had taught us this song and we liked it very much, and he was himself very fond of it.

When we reached the spring, we would gather wood, build the fire and put on the water to boil for tea.

In the bathhouse we would undress together. And as I was used to stripping among men, as an athlete and swimmer in the gym or swimming pool, I was usually first to finish. The room was very cold, quite a bit below freezing temperature, and pretty snappy for the naked body, so I would start to step around, and do a little shadow-boxing, or simply jump around with the joy of life, the cold frosty winter air biting into the skin—an outlet for my vitality and to keep warm. Now and then I would make a feinting poke at Lawrence and Gótzsche, and they would make a funny gesture of defence—perhaps with one leg half out of their pants or in the act of pulling their shirts over their head. At first I did not see their nakedness, but just a couple of men. I felt as any athlete among athletes does—natural, neutral, and not aware of nakedness. Then it suddenly occurred to me what white skin they both had. I, on the contrary, had still a faint coat of tan on my body from last summer. But they seemed almost of a phosphorescent white in the half-dark room. Identical in complexion they were with the white whiteness that is typical of red-haired people, although none of them were red-heads, only a tinge in places. They had this curious whiteness that to me is like the sprout of a potato in a dark cellar, or even a tapeworm. That is the way all too-white people strike one, naked like a sprout or a tapeworm. And as I stepped around shadow-boxing, a feeling of superiority, of bodily superiority, came over me. Not that they were weaklings. Gótzsche was perhaps even better built than myself, well-developed muscles and of harmonious proportions, but he was smaller. Lawrence, on the contrary, was a wee bit taller than I, but his body was undeveloped, athletically speaking. I would not call him skinny, but rather say he was slim with thin legs like the Archbishop of Canterbury, or like most Englishmen, but otherwise a well-proportioned body, harmonious in its slimness. He did not seem frail, but gave you a feeling of sinewy strength rather than muscle strength, a tenacious strength of his own. But his reddish-brown beard, sticking out in front of him, and his heavy dark hair covering his head, made his face over-clothed in

contrast to his bare white body and made me aware of his nakedness. None of us used bathing trunks and I couldn't help feeling bodily superior, championish.¹

When he was completely naked he stood erect for a moment, stretched out his arms and took a deep breath, shedding off the enclosed feeling of tight woollen underwear, and in the dusky light his body stood out in its ivory whiteness like sculpture.

With his outstretched arms he reminded me instantly of a medieval woodcarving of Christ on the Cross. But without the loin-cloth. As he said himself, "Christ rises when He rises from the dead, in the flesh, not merely as spirit. He rises with hands and feet, as Thomas knew for certain: and if with hands and feet, then with lips and stomach and genitals of a man. Christ risen, and risen in the whole of His flesh, not with some left out."

The refracted dim light from the archway of the other room behind him was like a halo.

The separate room that enclosed the pool was built of rough-hewn granite boulders, with a rather high ceiling that gave it a tower-like appearance. The only light came from a tiny window high in the wall. The water level was quite a bit below the floor of the other room, so a stairway built of rough stone led to the bottom of the pool. The water, supposed to be radio-active, had a temperature somewhat higher than blood heat. The hot water came bubbling up from a somewhat sandy and muddy bottom, about four feet deep. The surface of the water extended clear out to all the walls, and reminded one of a well shaft. I should say the pool was about seven to eight feet square. In the icy air the water seemed to be slightly steaming. The moisture condensed on the cold stone walls, and oozed down on the rough surface, emphasizing the impression of a well shaft.

Into this tiny pool of lovely, warm, clear and sparkling water we all went. We took great care not to touch the bottom with our feet, as we did not want to disturb the slight layer of mud on the otherwise sandy ground. Or

¹ Having won Nordic Championship—Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, in backstroke, 1919, and qualified for the Danish Olympic Swimming team in 1920.

maybe it wasn't mud at all, but a sediment of dirt, which hundreds of people, all kinds of people—shepherds, Indians, Mexicans, and I am sure, no less dirty White people—had scrubbed off themselves in the long span of years the pool had been in use. Also sick people came to be cured, to shed their diseases in the water. And so, to avoid muddying the water, we would slide our bodies, floating smoothly and very carefully over the surface of the water, to the centre of the pool. The floating was accomplished with great ease as the water seemed very buoyant, and required only slight movements of hands and feet to keep our bodies on the surface.

Once in the water, one felt a curious delight and sense of well-being. The lovely warmth of the soft water, the silky tickle of the bubbles on one's flesh, and the embrace of the buoyant spring seemed to hold one's body softly extended in the elements, in perfect relaxation.

We would relax in silence and in a blissful state—meditate. In a transport of delight we would feel as though we were floating on soft velvety clouds—into the heights of absolute benediction for just being alive.

In the stillness of silence we would sometimes hear rumbling sounds coming from deep, deep down the subterranean interior of the earth, and feel a quivering of the water around our bodies. We would be struck by awe and wonder, and our thoughts would enter new channels. Would the lovely peaceful spring become a steaming geyser and throw us scalded against the roof, or would the earth tremble and let us be crushed beneath the tumbling rocky walls. Oh, helpless, naked bodies, just mere matter. My previous feeling of superiority in body evaporated instantly, and I said to myself, "There are other kinds of superiority, my boy."

In awe we would speak about the forces of the universe and of the powers of hidden strength inside the earth. And Lawrence would talk of the wonder of radium, or of this or that, and sooner than we realized we were back to reality and chatter.

I looked at Lawrence, his naked white body floating on

the water, his head back and his red beard sticking up in the air, waving as he talked. And as I looked at him I recalled what he had written about his own particular feelings of superiority. He said:

"I feel I'm the superior of most men I meet. Not in birth, because I never had a great-grandfather. Not in money, because I've got none. Not in education, because I'm merely scrappy. And certainly not in beauty or in manly strength.

"Well, what then?

"Just in myself. When I'm challenged, I do feel myself superior to most of the men I meet. Just a natural superiority. But not till there enters an element of challenge.

"When I meet another man, and he is just himself—even if he is an ignorant Mexican, pitted with smallpox—then there is no question between us of superiority or inferiority. He is a man and I am a man. We are ourselves. There is no question between us.

"But let a question arise, let there be a challenge, and then I feel he should do reverence to the gods in me, because they are more than the gods in him. And he should give reverence to the very me, because it is more at one with the gods than is his very self.

"If this is conceit, I am sorry. But it's the gods in me that matter. And in other men.

"As for me, I am so glad to salute the brave, reckless gods in another man—so glad to meet a man who will abide by his very self.

"Ideas! Ideals! All this paper between us. What a weariness.

"If only people would meet in their very selves, without wanting to put some idea over one another, or some ideal.

"Damn all ideas and all ideals. Damn all the false stress, and the pins. I am I. Here am I. Where are you? Ah, there you are! Now, damn the consequences, we have met."

And I repeated to myself: "It's the gods in me that matter. And in other men." And again there was this strange rumbling sound from the unknown, and I added, "Yes, and the gods beyond."

Now damn the consequences, we have met.

And I thought of Lawrence: the unknown powers, the gods beyond, while leisurely enjoying the floating on top of that nice warm water. And I thought of Lawrence in connection with the elements and ourselves. There had been rumblings, but no disastrous upheaval. He was like the rumbling unknown powers, but in spite of the rumblings we enjoyed the life-giving, sparkling spring water and likewise the friendship he so gratuitously had bestowed upon us. Even though he said he did not want friends, comrades, brothers nor pals. In reality he was to us just that—which we ordinarily term by these words. So he can call it what he will: men to be at peace with. And here, crowded together in the water, I also happened to remind myself of what he had written:

“I only know that my body doesn’t by any means gravitate to all I meet or know. I find I can shake hands with a few people. But most I wouldn’t touch with a long prop.”

Now here in the water it was not a matter of shaking hands, it was naked bodies crowded together. In order to keep floating and not disturb the mud we had to keep ourselves in the centre, as the water at the edge of the small pool was very shallow and full of rocks, so it only left us a very small area to manoeuvre in. And so our bodies would constantly rub or bump into one another—arms, hips and legs would touch. There was nothing in that. One’s body is just as natural as one’s hand—what of it if you rub hips or bump your heads together. I have done that with hundreds of swimmers. And in water polo we would crawl all over or cling to each other’s naked bodies.

But here in that little pool, rubbing limbs with Lawrence, it was a little different. Not in fact, however, but in consciousness. But I should never have thought of it or been conscious about it, if my mind hadn’t been injected with poison from slanderous evil persons accusing Lawrence of being homosexual.

“Why,” they said, “he even writes about it in his books.”

“Perhaps so,” I said. “But just because he perhaps occasionally writes about it, it doesn’t justify your statement

nor even your suspicion. To me it is absurd and I don't believe it.

"Do you also accuse him of murder?" I said. "Because he writes about a murder in a book. Then most writers could be suspected or accused of being murderers—how lurid people can be!"

I had just been reading "Women in Love" and in rubbing limbs with Lawrence I couldn't help recalling to myself his description of the wrestling scene. That, and the false rumours about him, made me very conscious of him. I was alert and watched him very carefully. But despite all that, I could only realize, and happily so, that he was as sound as I, and not the pervert he was accused of being.

Not that I am to judge or condemn people with this affliction. Adults' private relations are none of my affair.

Even if he had been, my interest in him should have been none the less. But in the interest of truth, as I know it, I am anxious to destroy a common rumour that to my knowledge is untrue. Few men, and perhaps none, have been so intimate with him as Gótzsche and I, and never did we ever have the slightest reason even for suspicion. He was not, either, a hermaphrodite; that at least, my eyes recorded for a fact!

The water in the pool was so lovely that we felt like staying there for ever, but there was a limit, as after five or ten minutes at the most, the water had a tendency to tire one. Lawrence was always very cautious about not overstaying and also anxious to get us out of it when he thought we had had enough. He was always the first to get out of the water and wash himself. Standing on one of the lower steps of the stone stairs, emerged in the water to well over the knees, he would lather himself with soap-suds and scrub his body clean. Then he would take the final dip in the water and rinse himself off, walk cautiously up the rough steps and dress hastily, while chatting to us or humming a tune. When finished he would run outdoors, shouting a reminder to get out of the water, go to the fire and start preparing our lunch.

Next to wash off on the stone steps would be Gótzsche,

and when dressed he would join Lawrence in getting lunch ready.

And I was left alone, now floating in a milky water among dots of soapsuds and foam, meditating, enjoying having the pool all to myself, despite its soapiness.

Lawrence would now and then cry a warning to me to get out of the water, but I never minded until one of them shouted "Lunch is finished!" Then I would hurriedly wash, dress and rush out to join the others.

And how grand the lunch tasted. Afterwards I would wash the dishes. We would linger about for a short time and depart for home.

In our daily discussion at tea-time in our cabin, the topic most often discussed was perhaps the art of painting. And in many of his statements he seemed, as on other topics, often contradictory. The very first time we met him he said that the art of painting bored him.

"Why paint?" he said. "The art of painting is dead. Everything that can possibly be painted has been painted, every brush-stroke that can possibly be laid on canvas has been laid on. The visual arts are at a dead end."

To me he seemed like a boy hopelessly in love, always denouncing his love. Since he was a little schoolboy he had been making drawings and water-colours. All around the world he had carried with him a copy he had made (recently in the National Gallery, London) of Piero Di Cosimo's *Death of Procris* and now hanging on his wall.

Gótzsche and I had a very broad appreciation of art, from prehistoric scribbling or painting on rocks up to and including the last isms of today.

We wanted very much to see something in Lawrence's beloved *Procris*, but, sincerely, we could not. It was a bad copy; very amateurish, it was, the colour muddy and the drawing helplessly but painfully and conscientiously done, seemingly in great earnestness. It did not take an expert to see it was far from the original. We looked for a Henri Rousseau quality but could not find it. Nor could we see a new quality in it or distinguish it from thousands

of other amateur copies. And we told him so. He said he had had great fun in doing it, that he had always loved pictures, the pictorial art. And further went on to say:

"I never went to an art school. I have had only one real lesson in painting in all my life. But, of course, I was thoroughly drilled in drawing—the solid-geometry sort, and the plaster-cast sort, and the pin-wire sort. I think the solid-geometry sort, with all its elementary laws of perspective, was valuable. But the pin-wire sort and the plaster-cast light-and-shade sort was harmful. Plaster-casts and pin-wire outlines were always so repulsive to me. I quite early decided I couldn't draw. I couldn't draw, so I could never do anything on my own. When I did paint jugs of flowers or bread and potatoes, or cottages in a lane, copying from nature, the result wasn't very thrilling. Nature was more or less of a plaster-cast to me—those plaster-cast heads of Minerva or figures of dying gladiators which so unnerved me as a youth. The 'object,' be it what it might, was always slightly repulsive to me, once I sat down in front of it to paint it. So, of course, I decided I couldn't really paint. Perhaps I can't. But I verily believe I can make pictures, which is to me all that matters in this respect. The art of painting consists of making pictures—and so many artists accomplish canvases without coming within miles of painting a picture.

"I learned to paint from copying other pictures—usually reproductions, sometimes even photographs. When I was a boy, how I concentrated over it! Copying some perfectly worthless reproduction in some magazine. I worked with almost dry water-colour, stroke by stroke, covering half a square inch at a time, each square inch perfect and complete, proceeding in a kind of mosaic advance, with no idea at all of laying on a broad wash. Hours and hours of intense concentration, inch by inch progress, in a method entirely wrong—and yet those copies of mine managed, when they were finished, to have a certain something that delighted me—a certain glow of life, which was beauty to me.

"As I grew more ambitious, I copied Leader's landscapes,

and Frank Brangwyn's cartoon-like pictures, then Peter de Wint and Girtin water-colours. I can never be sufficiently grateful for the series of English water-colour painters, published by *The Studio* in eight parts, when I was a youth. I had only six of the eight parts, but they were invaluable to me. I copied them with the greatest joy, and found some of them extremely difficult. Surely I put as much labour into copying from those water-colour reproductions as most modern art students put into all their years of study. And I had enormous profit from it. I not only acquired a considerable technical skill in handling water-colour—let any man try copying the English water-colour artists, from Paul Sandby and Peter de Wint and Girtin, up to Frank Brangwyn and the impressionists like Brabazon, and he will see how much skill he requires—but also I developed visionary awareness.

"All my life I have, from time to time, gone back to paint, because it gave me a form of delight that words can never give. Perhaps the joy in words goes deeper and is for that reason more unconscious. The *conscious* delight is certainly stronger in paint. I have gone back to paint for real pleasure—and by paint I mean copying, copying either in oils or water. I think the greatest pleasure I ever got came from copying Angelico's *Flight into Egypt* and Lorenzetti's big picture of the Thebaïd, in each case working from photographs and putting in my own colour; or perhaps even more, a Carpaccio picture in Venice. Then I *really* learned what life, what powerful life has been put into every curve, every motion of a great picture. Purity of spirit, sensitive awareness, intense eagerness to portray an inward vision, how it all comes. The English water-colours are frail in comparison—and the French and the Flemings are shallow. The great Rembrandt I never tried to copy, though I loved him intensely, even more than I do now; and Rubens I never tried, though I always liked him so much, only he seemed so spread out. But I have copied Peter de Hooch and Vandyck and others that I forget. Yet none of them gave me the deep thrill of the Italians, Carpaccio, or the lovely *Death of Procris* by Piero di Cosimo,

in the National Gallery, or that *Wedding* with the scarlet legs, in the Uffizi, or a Giotto from Padua. I must have made many copies in my day, and got endless joy out of them."

There could be no denying, of course, that Lawrence got a great kick out of copying pictures, but his work failed to transfer that joy to others than himself. Anybody would still prefer the original to his copies. They did not have the charm that a child's picture can have. For although it was childishly done it was done by a mature being. His work possessed no interest whatsoever as a work of painting and would not attract any attention among thousands of mediocre copies. But—for there is a but—if you knew they were done by Lawrence, they would then have a quality and demand an interest, not in relation to other pictures or art, but in relation to himself. It would be very interesting to study his work from that angle. It became a study of the man himself. Where the copy varied from the original you might take it for an emphasis of his own intention, conscious or unconscious. For although he admired the pictures he was copying and in great earnestness intended to follow the master, his own great personality would not let itself be tied up. Even though he strove to follow the original there were many errors or unconscious deviations and here and there a few wilful variations.

Just to take one example: It was only a little better than a year since I had studied in the National Gallery in London, and knew the *Death of Procris* very well. And so in my varied criticism I said to him:

"Can't you see the blood is out of key. It is the first thing you see—it is out of tone. It is such a fierce, bloody, bloody red that you can't help but see it. It throws your picture out of balance."

"Yes," he said, "I delighted so in painting that blood-stream. I could not resist the urge to make it real red-red, only I couldn't get it bloody enough, the warm, slightly steaming, liquid red blood. I wanted to experience the lust of killing in that picture. Killing is natural to man, you know. It is just as natural as lying with a woman. I often feel I could kill and enjoy it," he said as he looked at me.

"Perhaps I'd better not entice you too much," I answered him, "or you might want to experience your lust on me."

We both laughed.

Now, Lawrence was often painfully frank in his opinion or criticism of others. Regardless of how much he would hurt others' feelings, he always spoke what he believed to be true. So Gótzsche and I did not spare him when we knew we had a right to speak, and a greater experience and knowledge. It was with mixed feelings, however, when we knocked him down, but we did not spare him or use kid gloves either, when we did so. We had, like most Danes, always been frank and outspoken, and our meeting with Lawrence had only reinforced this frankness. Only—sometimes we felt sorry about it, perhaps we had been too strong in our criticism, because he was so joyously happy over his paintings (copies). So one day I said to Frieda:

"I am sorry if I hurt Lawrence in criticizing his pictures so severely."

But she replied, "Don't you ever mind, it's good for him to get some of his own medicine! Does he ever spare you, or me, or anybody else?"

"No," I answered.

And she continued: "It's good for him that others besides myself can tell ~~him~~ a few things once in a while. All these creatures that always blindly adore him and never dare contradict him, no matter what, make me sick. You keep it up, Merrill. Always have courage to stick up for your rights and beliefs, even if you might hurt him; he will respect you so much more for it."

A constant item in Lawrence's travelling outfit was a small portfolio of coloured prints, chiefly of Renaissance and primitive Italian paintings. Although he did not care to possess things, here was something he seemed to treasure very much. Sometimes we asked to borrow this portfolio, which he gladly lent us, but always with a "you'll be careful, won't you?" and he seemed anxious to get it back.

He was fairly well posted on the world of art, but like almost every writer, his was chiefly a literary approach.

For example, when he spoke of the frescoes in the Caves of Ajante, India, he commented on the perfect spiritual relation between "the figures." As for contrast what a modern painter would say: "In painting, be it ancient or modern, let us first of all avoid the attempt to discover what it depicts, and give first place to injunctions that issue from colour and form."

Of the many things he said to us on painting and which I have found he at one time or other put into print, I will quote freely:

"A picture lives with the life you put into it. If you put no *life* into it—no thrill, no concentration of delight or passion of visual discovery—then the picture is dead, like so many canvases, no matter how much thorough and scientific work is put into it. Even if you only copy a purely banal reproduction of any old bridge, some sort of keen, delighted awareness of the old bridge or of its atmosphere, or the image it has kindled inside you, can go over on to the paper and give a certain touch of life to a banal conception.

"It needs a certain purity of spirit to be an artist, of any sort. The motto which should be written over every school of art is: 'Blessed are the pure in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' But by 'pure in spirit' we mean pure in spirit. An artist may be a profligate and, from the social point of view, a scoundrel. But if he can paint a nude woman, or a couple of apples, so that they are a living image, then he is pure in spirit, and, for the time being, his is the kingdom of heaven.. This is the beginning of all art, visual or literary or musical; be pure in spirit. It isn't the same as goodness. It is much more difficult and nearer the divine. The divine isn't only good, it is all things.

"Visionary awareness must be developed and I believe one can only develop one's visionary awareness by close contact with the vision itself: that is, by knowing pictures, real vision-pictures, and by dwelling on them, and really dwelling in them. It is a great delight to dwell in a picture. But it needs a purity of spirit, a sloughing of vulgar sensation and vulgar interest, and above all, vulgar contact, that few people

know how to perform. Oh, if art schools only taught that! If, instead of saying: 'This drawing is wrong, incorrect, badly drawn, etc.'—they would say: 'Isn't this in bad taste? Isn't it insensitive? Isn't that an insentient curve with none of the delicate awareness of life in it? But art is treated all wrong. It is treated as if it were a science, which it is not. Art is a form of religion, minus the Ten Commandment business, which is sociological. Art is a form of supremely delicate awareness and atonement—meaning at-oneness, the state of being at one with the object—a great atonement in delight, for I can never look on art save as a form of delight.

"To me a picture has delight in it, or it isn't a picture. The saddest pictures of Piero della Francesca or Sodoma or Goya have still that indescribable delight that goes with the real picture. Modern critics talk a lot about ugliness, but I never saw a real picture that seemed to me ugly. The theme may be ugly, there may be a terrifying, distressing, almost repulsive quality, as in El Greco. Yet it is all, in some strange way, swept up in the delight of a picture. No artist, even the gloomiest, ever painted a picture without the curious delight in image-making for his strongest impulse."

When Lawrence spoke on art I was nearly always in opposition, and we often split hairs over his conclusions.

When he said, "It needs a certain purity of spirit to be an artist," I have no quarrel, but when he continues to say, "if he can paint a nude woman, or a couple of apples, so that they are a living image, then he is pure in spirit," I disagree. If one has to say such things it would be better to conclude thus: So that they will live by themselves as an integral part of the picture.

"Visionary awareness must be developed." I can sanction that in my own way, but not the vision Lawrence speaks of. And that goes for the following, too:

"Art is treated all wrong. It is treated as if it were a science, which it is not. Art is a form of religion, minus the Ten Commandment business, which is sociological. Art is a form of supremely delicate awareness and atonement—meaning at-oneness, the state of being at one with

the object." Here we must stop, for I don't agree any longer. Why not, instead of the "object" say, to be in his own language: the state of being at one with the dark gods within us—Art is a form of religion, you know!

A village priest might have said all this (but for the Ten Commandment business) and surely we should not have known. And who cares? Coming from Lawrence, it is surprisingly dull, especially so with his background of brilliance in other fields. I think it proves that a writer, even a writer of Lawrence's standard, should abstain from writing on painting. Even though he has dabbled in paint, it seems to make it worse. (I might also prove, by trying to write, to write this book, that painters shouldn't write. But let me assure you, if I can help it I shall not do it again!)

But I do disagree about Art being mixed up with or based upon living images, objects, religion, even religion without the Ten Commandment business, and what-nots—even moral on top of it all, like a cherry on a Manhattan cocktail. As he said:

"The essential function of Art is moral. Not aesthetic, not decorative, not pastime and reaction. But moral. The essential function of art is moral.

"But a passionate, implicit morality, not didactic. A morality which changes the blood, rather than the mind. Changes the blood first. The mind follows later, in the wake." He also said:

"An artist *can* only create what he really religiously *feels* is truth, religious truth really *felt*, in the blood and bones."

I could fully agree to that, but he continued to say:

"The African Negro sculptor, the Egyptians, the Greeks and the Renaissance artist, all had a deep religious feeling towards their work, and that is why they produced great art. They had a mission to fulfil. The modern artist has no religious feeling, no mission to fulfil, that is why the art of today is dead."

I protested vigorously, and brought forth that modern artists were as religious to their work as any other century's artists.

"Ours is an excessively conscious age. We *know* so much,

we feel so little. I have lived enough among painters and around studios to have had all the theories—and how contradictory they are—rammed down my throat. A man has to have a gizzard like an ostrich to digest all the brass tacks and wire nails of modern art theories. Perhaps all the theories, the utterly indigestible theories, like nails in an ostrich's gizzard, do indeed help to grind small and make digestible all the emotional and aesthetic pabulum that lies in an artist's soul. But they can serve no other purpose. Not even corrective. The modern theories of art make real pictures impossible. You only get these demonstrations, critical ventures in paint, and fantastic negations. And the bit of fantasy that may lie in the negation—as in a Dufy or a Chirico—is just the bit that escaped theory and perhaps saves the picture. Theorize, theorize all you like—but when you start to paint, shut your theoretic eyes and go for it with instinct and intuition.

“Going through the Paris picture shops this year of grace, and seeing the Dufys and Chiricos, etc., and the Japanese Ito¹ with his wish-wash nudes with pearl-button eyes, the same weariness comes over one. They are all so would-be, they make such efforts. They at least have nothing to paint. In the midst of them a graceful Friesz flower-piece or a blotting-paper Laurencin seems a masterpiece. At least here is a bit of fresh expression in paint. Trivial enough, when compared with the big painters, but still, as far as they go, pictorial.”

In saying this he condemned himself so severely that it will be hard for most painters to keep any respect for or interest in what he might have to say on painting. It shows clearly how little he really did understand, or rather that he didn't understand at all. In my estimation, art is art, whether ancient or modern, and you either understand all art or you don't understand art at all.

To say you understand the art of the last few centuries, but not modern art and not ancient either, is the same as saying that you never understood art at all. And we won't quarrel about your own personal appreciations.

¹ Lawrence apparently is mixed up in names, *Ito* is the Japanese dancer.

We might all be against theories, so was Lawrence, and especially against modern art theories. But even so, he had to put forth his own theories—and they were as contradictory as he accused others of being. And if we have to swallow his theories too, I am afraid we must have two ostrich gizzards with which to digest. And when he places Laurencin as a master ahead, or at the expense, of Chirico, a weariness comes over me, and I feel utterly hopeless about him. Such talk pains my bowels and hurts my head. I must crouch and grab my head between my hands, and crying to heaven I say, "Forgive him, for he does not know whereof he is talking."

And I didn't feel so much better about it when he said, "Some of Turner's landscape compositions are, to my feeling, among the finest that exist. They still satisfy me more even than Van Gogh's or Cézanne's landscapes. . . . Van Gogh's surging earth and Cézanne's explosive or rattling planes worry me."

And here is to my mind a typical writer's viewpoint on a great painter: Lawrence said, "The most interesting figure in modern art, and the only really interesting figure, is Cézanne, and that not so much because of his achievement as because of his struggle."

I admired Lawrence for many things, and was in perfect accord with him on numerous topics and could share his many radical views, but it pained me a little that he should be so backward on painting. I was often thinking about what to say to him, to bring him to a closer understanding of art. If I could only make him understand modern art, he would understand all art. I had the same fight with him on painting that he had with society on most of his ideas. I recall that one day he said:

"An artist is usually a damned liar, but his art, if it be art, will tell you the truth of his day. And that is all that matters. Away with eternal truth, truth lives from day to day, and the marvellous Plato of yesterday is chiefly bosh today."

Now he could say that of Plato, but he could not say the same about yesterday's painters. He wouldn't even

agree when a painter would say it, had the courage to do so.

"The world fears a new experience more than it fears anything," he said one day. "Because a new experience displaces so many old experiences."

I decided that when he would come to our cabin in the afternoon I would have another art discussion with him. Not the soul of art or its psychologic aspects, but just try to make him see the justification of abstract art. It is my sincere belief that the understanding or appreciation of abstract art is vital to the understanding of all art, as there is no full understanding without it. It is the purest and simplest of all art expression. It is the foundation of all art and also its essence.

I was sitting in the kitchen, at the table by the window, looking out. In the distance was the dark forest against the blue mountains in a haze—a Japanese print, beautiful. On the flat snow-covered alfalfa field was a red cow. On the white background it looked simple as a painting from the Altamira Cave. There was a pine tree standing in the yard, and on one of its branches sat a magpie. Sombre as a Chinese scroll-painting. In the yard was also a pig mushing around, a pink and black pig. Solid and simple in its form like Egyptian sculpture. There was also my hand-axe lying on the bench just outside the window. I always thought it comparable in its efficient beauty to the stone implements of palaeolithic time. I became aware of the window itself, with its bars and panes. Some of the panes were not true, and what was seen through them distorted. The emphasis of the bars horizontal and vertical lines; with the distortion of the panes, made the landscape, seen with and through the window, recall to me a painting by Cézanne. Not that this description has anything to do with the Cézanne theories. It just happened to remind me. My eyes now travelled inside the room, and on the table by the stove they saw two hard-boiled eggs on a plate, one whole and one cut in half. And in the eggs' impeccable parabola I saw Brancusi and the Twentieth Century's pure form. And in the cut egg I saw the orange circle of the yolk.

Superimposed it on its immediate surroundings and visualized abstractions of Braque and Picasso. And there on the floor was the garbage tin, exposing its contents of broken egg-shells, spiral peelings of potatoes, crumpled paper and coffee grounds, reminding me of the Nihilist in art, Marcel Duchamp. And I said to myself, "It is all beautiful. Art is in all things. There is something in all ideas. There is beauty in creation, but also destruction."

And even Lawrence has said, "In true art there is always the double rhythm of creating and destroying."

But he could not see what I could see. Although he has also said, "Art has two great functions. First, it provides an emotional experience. And then, if we have the courage of our own feelings, it becomes a mine of practical truth."

And then, on the table, next to me was Lawrence's portfolio with reproductions of Renaissance paintings. The picture exposed happened to be Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*, looking at me with that unfathomable smile. She said to me, "I am the supreme expression of all art!" And I answered her back, "You are beautiful, but like the marvellous Plato of yesterday, you are chiefly bosh today. I know the whole world is wondering about that smile of yours, admiring you, in awe for that smile. And you know very well that that smile is not your true worth; but a false attribution. I know your smile. It is tragedy. A smile of pity at the world's stupidity. I know, for I have read in your master's memoranda-book. Among the notes he, the great super-genius, Leonardo da Vinci, himself wrote he had seen some mud splashed on a wall, and he confessed he had seen the beauty in the shapes and design it made on the white wall. And you know that *your* beauty is no greater than that mud splashed on that wall. That is also why you smile: that sardonic smile of irony and disillusionment. Yes, I know."

But Lawrence doesn't know. Yet he says, "We know enough. We know too much. We know nothing. But we have to know all before we can know that knowing is nothing. Then there is a sort of peace, and we can start afresh, knowing we don't know."

If he would take that attitude when he would come in the afternoon, maybe I could get somewhere with him in the world of abstract art.

Well, that was a bit of meditation at the kitchen table by the window. But I must think over what I want to say to him in the afternoon, try to find some clear arguments for my cause. For he is so damned clever with words—that Lorenzo.

And I, a beginner in the English language, find it so hard to whip one's thoughts into clear, concise manifestations. I know beforehand I cannot do it, so I will just say something like this. And I started on my rehearsal. Briefly, it was the history of art throughout the ages: From prehistoric time, from epoch to epoch, up through the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and beyond, and almost up to the present day, or at least to the beginning of the Twentieth Century, one of the major obvious reasons for making pictorial images in stone or paint was to transmit a story, one way or other.

With that agreed, let us then, without being scholastic, look very roughly at the developments of figuratively telling a story. And for the sake of argument, let us say that a picture broadly consists of three main elements. Namely, the Pattern, the Image and the Story.

When first glancing at a picture, the first thing we see is a pattern. Then we look closer and discover that the pattern consists of images, and then we want to know what the images represent, and try to figure out the story. We do that today, and have always done it. The results of the interpretation are as multitudinous as the interpreters.

But man has always striven for efficiency and perfection even in prehistoric time. He was not content with a picture that could be translated into various meanings—it was not efficient as a reporter. And so, almost from the very earliest beginnings, picture-making was systematized into a picture language, into symbols, pictographs and, finally, into the letter and its variations of today—the telegraph, the printing press and its products.

In newspapers, advertising, etc., we have a mechanical

report, and in drama, poetry, etc., we have artistic report in story-telling. Entirely divorced from the picture, a complete abstraction from the image. And we might add that numerals developed into mathematics, and to stay in the language, we will call that scientific report.

That is briefly how the story-telling technique of a picture developed, divorced from the picture itself, *into purely abstract being*.

Now we will go back to the beginning and look at another phase of the picture: the image. The image that told the story. As a story little by little severed itself as a reporter from the picture, the image became more important and started on its way of evolution. It took many centuries before the image-making developed into painting in perspective and then into photography, but not yet content demanded movement, and then further, sound. And so today we are near perfection in mechanical image-making. The coloured picture that moves and speaks, and no doubt soon will acquire space—the long sought-for third dimension.

That is the image-making part of the picture, no longer arrested by the pattern. Divorced and abstracted into separate being.

We will now go back to the pattern, the pattern that made the image. By pattern, I not only mean the obvious physical pattern but all its allies and that which constitute it: namely, line, colour, form, space, proportion, rhythm, relationships, contrast, repetition, etc., the physical pattern, but also the aesthetic, the emotional and the psychological pattern, and perhaps various others. This, the pattern, has always been the chief concern of all great artists. But to the casual onlooker this has, to a great extent, been obscured by the story and the image. And I must admit that for the untrained person it takes in many cases great concentration to fully enjoy the pure pattern-qualities, that which we call art, because of the constant disturbances of the two hitherto allies: story and image.

Centuries back, the pattern-making developed on its own pure being into geometry to geometric pattern and arab-

esques, and again later into utilitarian pattern; engineering, the mechanical pattern-making.

But the free, artistic pattern-making, divorced from its former allies, was first begun on its own pure development in the beginning of this century. The artists of today are still struggling for the justification of its existence.

"The world fears a new experience more than it fears anything. Because a new experience displaces too many old experiences."

But is it such a new experience after all? Art has always been; all we want to do is to strip it of a few non-essentials and make it more clear, and really it should meet no opposition.

The general education, literacy, of people was slow, and so the story-telling image-picture was perhaps justified up until recent time. With the development of perspective it merely added to the story, it never surpassed the prehistoric picture.

What about the Renaissance masterpieces, Leonardo, Michael Angelo, the great church frescoes, you might ask.

Well, I must say, I can only consider them as elaborate prehistoric cave-paintings. They are still on the same plan, the function being the same.

Then there has been no artistic progress, you might remark. And I must say I am inclined to think not. We cannot speak of progress in art. Certain demands or fundamentals within us are seemingly permanent, only new epochs have new aspirations. I do not think that art of today is superior to art of any other period. Art is art, whether ten thousand years old or only ten days. But art of past periods does not fit our mental make-up, nor our present mode of life. We must shape our art of today to fit our special need.

The mass of people can now read. The story, the report, is no longer needed in the pattern. The image-making can be enjoyed in the movies, so the image is no longer needed in the pattern either. Left, we have the pattern itself, without story, without image, the pure pattern, that which has always been the essential in all great art.

I think we can readily agree that art does not survive on its descriptive qualities, but on its artistic qualities only. Millions of Madonnas have been painted, but only a comparatively few remain as works of art. Which shows that a work of art does not live on what it depicts, but on its artistic value alone.

To most people the description in a picture acts as an intrusion, and in many cases is an absolute obstruction, and finally, to the essential, a subversion. Modern minds do not want virgin Madonnas, sweet pastorals, or romantic seascapes mixed in with their aesthetics. It is superfluous, and superfluity is something beyond that which is needed or wanted.

We have now come to the realization of a purer art. And by that I mean an art chiefly concerned about art, stripped of all non-essentials. Abstract art!

To me a pure abstraction (visual music) is always most artistically satisfying.

This is just about what I got together for my defence for that afternoon. It is, without going too much into detail, in the main the essence of my many varied arguments with Lawrence on abstract art. He never gave in, or even admitted the justification of abstract art. I will give two quotations of his that will furnish his stand on the matter. He said:

"I find myself mystified by the cant-like phrase, Significant Form and Pure Form. They are just the magic jargon of invocation, nothing else. If you want to invoke an aesthetic ecstasy, stand in front of a Matisse and whisper fervently under your breath 'Significant Form! Significant Form!' and it will come. It sounds to me like a form of masturbation, an attempt to make the body react to some cerebral formula."

And as for your abstract art, he said:

"Abstractionists are of the hideous machine industrialism and are only making a memorial to their spiritual impotence. The soul's disintegration. Abstraction is a picture of nothing, of absolutely nothing, and has no relation with life. Life has been made unbearable, and art has become the refuge

of people living in fancy. As for your world of art and your world of reality you have to separate the two, because you can't bear to know what you really are, so you say it's the world of art. The world of art is only the truth about the real world, but you are too far gone to see it. Isolating the soul, surrounding the heart with frozen air."

After this short tirade, you can readily see that it was always futile for either of us to accept the other's point. It only made me feel still more justified in painting abstractedly, if you will, the chaos of the world of today. Not that I imply such theories to my work, I am not concerned about literary qualities in my work. I just bring this and the following up to meet the argument of Lawrence.

He said, "The world of art is only the truth about the real world, but you are too far gone to see it."

Let us take that up and see.

What are the people and the world today? I will let Lawrence answer that. He says about people: "They care! They are simply eaten up with caring. They are so busy caring about Fascism or Leagues of Nations or whether France is right or whether marriage is threatened, that they never know where they are. They certainly never live on the spot where they are. They inhabit abstract space, the desert void of politics, principles, right and wrong, and so forth. They are doomed to be abstract. Talking to them is like trying to have a human relationship with the letter 'x' in algebra."

Now this is Lawrence's own description of Life today. If we must have a life interest in our pictures, how could the above description be better pictured than in an abstract painting. I think this disproves his contention that "Abstraction is a picture of nothing, of absolute nothing, and has no relation with life."

It not only has a relation with life, it is part of life itself!

Although Lawrence spoke so vehemently against abstractionists and their product he had a capacity for the enjoyment of abstract beauty, without knowing or admitting it. This description will prove it:

"He looked at the shells they had picked up from the

shore and collected in a little box. Very slowly he took them out and began to look at them, one by one.

"There were black ones like buds of coal, and black ones with a white spiral thread, and funny knobby black and white ones, and tiny purple ones, and a bright sea-orange, semi-transparent clam shell, and little pink ones with long, sharp points, and glass ones, and lovely pearly ones. Worn shells like sea-ivory, marvellous substance, with all the structure showing; spirals like fairy staircases, and long, pure phallic pieces that were the centres of big shells, from which the whorl was all washed away; also curious flat, oval discs, with a lovely whorl traced on them, and an eye in the centre.

"He showed them to the other man, but he pushed them away, saying, 'Take them away. They make me know I have never been born.'"

One could almost think an abstract painter had made that description, if it weren't for such literary remarks as: fairy staircases, long, pure phallic pieces, and oval discs with an eye in the centre. That gives the writer away. But the description shows an appreciation of abstract beauty. He talks about lines, colour, pattern, different material, different qualities, transparency, substance and structure—all values the modern painter has accepted and incorporated in his work.

And still he denies abstractions, and still he goes on to say:

"Man is a thought-adventurer. Man is more, he is a life-adventurer. Which means he is a thought-adventurer, an emotion-adventurer, and a discoverer of himself and of the outer universe. A discoverer."

And yet Lawrence didn't discover abstract art, in this case he walked with his back to the sun, everything becoming obscure in his own shadow.

Although he has said, "You can idealize or intellectualize. Or, on the contrary, you can let the dark soul in you see for itself: an artist usually intellectualizes on top, and his dark under-consciousness goes on contradicting him beneath."

He proves this to be true also about himself in the foregoing quotations.

As the life we live today is being more and more abstracted from nature, and less spiritual, an abstract rendering of our epoch or period, seems only logical.

Or as Ozenfant says:

"What alone truly interests us is what fits in with our fundamental make-up. The image of which must always prove affecting when its pure lineaments take shape before us. That is the science which gears into our mechanism, and sets in motion our profoundest instincts. Stripped of the divinity with which the nineteenth century endowed it, it gains in humanity and in art.

"The Einsteinian attitude of mind, upon reflection, is revealed as a magnificent seeking after what is constant in variation; a constant from varied angles, stability in mutation."

In conclusion, I will kill the old order with a quotation from Moholy-Nagy: "The 'art' of the academies is dead. But the art of what is living still lives, and its forms, based on no previous analogies, grow out of present needs—even if these cannot always be formulated in words."

This might seem a lengthy, and perhaps to some readers, a tiresome account, but then that is how it was, only lengthier and more violent. For hours and hours we could split hairs on the subject of abstract art. But I think it proves how deeply interested Lawrence was in art, even if he denied it, and said the art of painting was dead.

He was also much concerned about the artist's everyday troubles and his difficulties in distributing his work. We often discussed the artist's plight.

The summary of these discussions, I have found that Lawrence later put into print, and I take the freedom to quote at length his view on these matters, and here is what I have picked out:

"Pictures are strange things. Most of them die as sure as flowers die and, once dead, they hang on the walls as stale as brown withered bouquets. The reason lies in ourselves. When we buy a picture because we like it, then the

picture responds fresh to some living feeling in us. But feelings change: quicker or slower. If our feeling for the picture was superficial, it wears away quickly—and quickly the picture is nothing but a dead rag hanging on the wall. On the other hand, if we can see a little deeper, we shall buy a picture that will at least last a year or two, and give a certain fresh joy all the time, like a living flower. We may even find something that will last us a lifetime. If we found a masterpiece, it would last many lifetimes. But there are not many masterpieces of any sort in this world.

“The fact remains there are pictures of every sort, and people of every sort to be pleased by them; and there is, perhaps, a limit to the length of time that even a masterpiece will please mankind. Raphael now occasionally bores us, after several centuries, and Michael Angelo begins to. If only we could get rid of the idea of ‘property’ in the arts! . . . It is fatal to look on pictures as pieces of property. Pictures are like flowers, that fade away sooner or later, and die, and must be thrown in the dustbin and burned. It is true of all pictures. Even the beloved Giorgione will one day die to human interest—but he is still very lovely, after almost five centuries, still a fresh flower. But when at last he is dead, as so many pictures are that hang on honoured walls, let us hope he won’t still be regarded as a piece of valuable property, worth huge sums, like lots of dead-as-door-nails canvases today.

“We may spend ten shillings on a bunch of roses, and throw away the dead stalks without thinking we have thrown away ten shillings. We know where we are. We paid for aesthetic pleasure, and we have had it. Lucky for us that money can buy roses. The value of a picture lies in the aesthetic emotion it brings, exactly as if it were a flower. The aesthetic emotion dead, the picture is a piece of ugly litter.

“Then there is the young school which thinks pictures should be kept in stacks like books in a library, and looked at for half an hour or so at a time, as we turn over the leaves of a book of reproductions. But this again entirely disregards the real psychology of pictures. It is true the

great trashy mess of pictures are exhausted in half an hour. But then why keep them in a stack, why keep them at all? On the other hand, if I had a Renoir nude, or a good Friesz flower-study, or even a Brabazon water-colour, I should want to keep it at least a year or two, and hang it up in a chosen place, to live with it and get all the fragrance out of it. And if I had the Titian 'Adam and Eve' from the Prado, I should want to have it hanging in my room all my life, to look at: because I know it would give me a subtle rejoicing all my life, and would make my life delightful. And if I had some Picassos I should want to keep them about six months, and some Braque I should like to have for about a year: then, probably, I should be through with them. But I would not want a Romney even for a day.

"And so it varies, with the individual and with the picture, and so it should be allowed to vary. But at present it is not allowed to vary. We all have to stare at the dead rags our fathers and mothers hang on the walls, just because they are *property*.

"But let us change it—then what? Why not have a great 'pictuary' where we can go and choose a picture? There would be men in charge who knew about pictures, just as librarians know about books. We subscribe, we pay a certain deposit, and our pictures are sent home to us, to keep for one year, for two, for ten, as we wish: at any rate, till we have got all the joy out of them, and want a change.

"There are few, very few, great artists in any age. But there are hundreds and hundreds of men and women with genuine artistic talent and beautiful artistic feeling, who produce quite lovely works—not immortal, not masterpieces, not 'great'; yet they are lovely, and will keep their loveliness a certain number of years; after which they will die, and the time will have come to destroy them.

"Now it is a tragedy that all these pictures with their temporary loveliness should be condemned to a premature dust-heap. For that is what they are. Contemporary art belongs to contemporary society. Society at large *needs* the pictures of its contemporaries, just as much as it needs the

books. Modern people read modern books. But they hang up pictures that belong to no age whatever, and have no life, and have no meaning, but are mere blotches of deadness on the walls.

"The living moment is everything. And in pictures we never experience it. It is useless asking the public to 'see' Matisse or Picasso or Braque. They will never see more than an odd horrific canvas anyhow. But does the modern public read James Joyce or Marcel Proust? It does not. It reads the great host of more congenial and more intelligible contemporary writers. And so the modern public is more or less up to date and on the spot about the general run of modern books. It is conscious of the literature of its day, moderately awake and intelligent in that respect.

"Now the only way to keep the public in touch with art is to let it get hold of works of art. It was just the same with books. In the old five-guinea and two-guinea days there was no public for literature, except the squire class. The great reading public came into being with the lending library. And the great picture-loving public would come into being with the lending pictuary. The public *wants* pictures hard enough. But it simply can't get them.

"And this will continue as long as a picture is regarded as a piece of property, and not as a source of aesthetic emotion, of sheer pleasure, as a flower is. The great public was utterly deprived of books till books ceased to be looked on as lumps of real estate, and came to be regarded as something belonging to the mind and consciousness, a spiritual instead of a gross material property.

"Something of the same must happen for pictures. The public wants and needs badly all the real aesthetic stimulus it can get. And it knows it. When books were made available, the vast reading public sprang into being almost at once. And a vast picture-loving public would arise, once the public could get at the pictures, personally.

"There are thousands of quite lovely pictures, not masterpieces, of course, but with real beauty, *which belong to today*, and which remain stacked dustily and hopelessly in corners of artists' studios, going stale. It is a great shame. The

public wants them, but it never sees them; and if it does see an occasional few, it daren't buy, especially as 'art' is high-priced, for it feels incompetent to judge. At the same time, the unhappy, work-glutted artists of today want above all things to let the public have their works. And these works are, we insist, an essential part of the education and emotional experience of the modern mind. It is necessary that adults should *know* them, as they know modern books. It is necessary that children should be familiar with them, in the constant stream of creation. Our aesthetic education is becoming immensely important, since it is so immensely neglected.

"And the public is pining for the pictures, but doesn't buy, because of the money-property complex. And the artist is pining to let the public have them, but daren't make himself cheap. And so the thing is an impasse, simple state of frustration.

"Now for the pictuary of modern works of art. Or, better still, an Artists' Co-operative Society, to supply pictures on loan or purchase, to the great public. Today nobody buys pictures, except as a speculation. If a man pays a hundred pounds for a canvas, he does it in the secret belief that that canvas will be worth a thousand pounds in a few years' time.

"The whole attitude is disgusting.

"The only way now is for the host of small artists to club together and form an Artists' Co-operative Society, with proper business intelligence and business energy, to supply the public with pictures on the public's own terms. Or for the shrewd business men of the world to take the matter up and make a profitable concern of it, as publishers have made a profitable concern of publishing books."

One day I was painting on a picture, when Lawrence happened to come by the cabin early in the afternoon. He stopped in to see me.

After watching me paint for a little while, he said I shouldn't paint a certain part of my picture the way I did, and he suggested to me how I should do it.

I told him that *I* was painting the picture, not he,

He continued watching me paint.

He liked the picture I worked on, which was something very unusual, but he had shown real enthusiasm for it and even commented that he liked it. There was something about it that fascinated him.

I stepped back from the easel to look at my work from a distance and suddenly Lawrence grabbed hold of the brush I held in my hand and tried to wrest it from me saying:

"Give me that brush, I want to paint that part of your picture."

But I wouldn't. And I had to engage in a bodily struggle to get my brush back. He wouldn't let go of it. I finally recovered it and told him:

"If you *have* to paint pictures, paint your own. Just say so, I will give you material and brushes for it. But I won't allow you to spoil *my* pictures."

The prospect of him painting a picture himself elevated him and he said "perhaps he would." And he started to ask me technical questions. But that is as far as it went. He never got started on any pictures, while at Del Monte. We had many fights, but never any real trouble. And that is, I think, because, as Lawrence has said:

"A deep instinct of kinship joins men together, and the kinship of flesh and blood keeps the warm flow of intuitional awareness streaming between human beings. Our true awareness of one another is intuitional, not mental. Attraction between people is really instinctive and intuitional, not an affair of judgment. And in mutual attraction lies perhaps the deepest pleasure in life, mutual attraction which may make us 'like' our travelling companion for the two or three hours we are together, then no more, or mutual attraction, that may deepen to powerful love, and last a lifetime."

And in connection with this he said:

"By intuition alone can man love and know either woman or world, and by intuition alone can he bring forth again images of magic awareness which we call art."

And that reminds me, that he once said:

"Art and aesthetics are like male and female, without each other there would be neither. It is a kind of art to realize the aesthetic."

In winding up my report on our relations and disputes on art, I think it incomplete without giving his view on criticism, so here it is:

"Criticism," he said, "can never be a science. It is, in the first place, much too personal, it is concerned with values that science ignores. The touchstone is emotion, not reason. A critic must be able to feel the impact of a work of art in all its complexity and force. To do so he must be a man of force, a complexity himself, which few critics are. A man with paltry, impudent nature will never write anything but paltry, impudent criticism. And a man who is emotionally educated is rare as a Phoenix. The more scholastically educated a man is generally, the more he is an emotional boor."

In our numerous discussions Lawrence would, as a rule, conquer through his vast knowledge and sagacity with words. And I will end this chapter as I once ended a dispute with him. It was after a duel of words that I said to him, "Yes, Lawrence, I will admit you have drubbed me soundly with multifarious words and your mind's convincing ingenuity, so that my common sense at present must give up, even though I know that deep inside myself is a keener sense that tells me that I am right, absolutely right. And I am very sorry I do not possess the brilliance with words and strategy of mind to convince you, or better still, to make you understand the significance of abstract art."

(Because, as Herbert Read has later said, to abstract art is reserved the honoured task of keeping "inviolate and alive the universal qualities of art, those elements which survive all changes.")

Lawrence smiled in friendliness—technically he had won, actually I was only cornered. In conclusion, I will give Lawrence the last word, and for once in this dispute agree with him.

The value of a picture lies in the aesthetic emotion it brings, exactly as if it were a flower.

I am not through yet, I have a *postscriptum* to do, a confession to make. I believe implicitly in my own Holy Ghost. And Lawrence has strengthened that belief in me. What I am to say, Lawrence said so often that I cannot neglect to mention it, and I think this is the place to quote him:

"Man can sin as much as he likes. There is only one penalty: the loss of his own integrity. Man should *never* do the thing he believes to be wrong. Because if he does, he loses his own singleness, wholeness, natural honour.

"If you want to do a thing, you've either got to believe, sincerely, that it's your true nature to do this thing, or else you've got to let it alone.

"Believe in your own Holy Ghost. Or else, if you doubt, abstain. A thing that you sincerely believe in cannot be wrong. Because belief does not come at will. It comes only from the Holy Ghost within. Therefore, a thing you truly believe in cannot be wrong."

Frieda often called us—Lawrence, Gótzsche and I—the Trinity. I recall an evening at Lawrence's house. We three men were squatted close together on the couch, chatting. Frieda was sitting at the table, by the lamp, knitting. She paused in her work, put her knitting down and rested her hands in her lap. She looked at us three on the couch and then she exclaimed, "You are quite a Trinity, aren't you—The Almighty, the Son and the Holy Ghost."

"Frieda, stop your silly nonsense," replied Lawrence.

But she didn't, and soon he would join in himself, and joke about it, and the Trinity was interpreted in many various ways. But not always sure which one of the Danes was the Son or who the Ghost, and so Frieda tried once and for all to determine who of us should be the Ghost. So I said, "Don't bother, the Ghost is a she."

"Bravo, Merrild," Frieda beamed, "you are right. Then you and Gótzsche become *one* as the Danes: the Son. How clever—Lorenzo, the Danes and I are the Trinity. Thank you, Merrild, for drawing me in."

The joking went on a little further and then drifted into

more serious talk. And the question was put to Lawrence. "What is God?" And readily he answered:

"I don't know what God is. But He is not simply a will. That is too simple. Too anthropomorphic. Because a man wants his own will and nothing but his will, he needn't say that God is the same will, magnified *ad infinitum*.

"To me, there may be one God, but he is nameless and unknowable. For me, there are also many Gods, that come into me and leave me again. And they have very various wills, I must say.

"It is the multiplicity of Gods within us make up the Holy Ghost."

Frieda said something about love, and Lawrence retorted:

"Why must you always talk about love, why must women always talk about love, damn women and love," and he went on to say, "there isn't such a thing as love!"

Frieda protested vigorously, and as they discussed it I wondered what made him make the statement. I thought of a passage in his last book where he admitted: "Not that even now he dared quite deny love. Love is perhaps an eternal part of life. But it is only a part. And when it is treated as if it were a whole, it becomes a disease."

As I became attentive again to the conversation, Frieda said hotly, "What about mother-love," defiantly expecting to have him cornered. But he retorted promptly:

"There isn't even such a thing as mother-love."

That statement aroused Frieda and they engaged in a furious argument. But she soon gave it up saying it was too silly. "It is bosh, I tell you, bosh!"

The argument had taken place in the middle of the room. As she broke off she went to her chair and took up her knitting, to calm down after the excitement. Lawrence placed himself across a chair, facing its back and resting both of his hands on its top. He was silent for a minute, but then he said:

"The grinding of the old millstones of love and God is what ails us, when there's no more grist between the stones. We've ground love very small.

"You can't lose yourself—neither in women, nor humanity

nor in God. You've always got yourself on your hands in the end."

Frieda did not comment, she had stubbornly shut herself up, *incommunicado*. Gótzsche and I preferred to remain listeners. Then Lawrence continued:

"Say what you like, every idea is perishable: even the idea of God or Love or Humanity or Liberty—even the greatest idea has its day and perishes. Each formulated religion is in the end only a great idea. Once the idea becomes explicit, it is dead. Yet we must have ideas.

"When a man follows the true inspiration of a new living idea, he then is the willing man whom the Fates lead onwards—but when the idea is really dead, and *still* man persists in following it, then he is the unwilling man whom the Fates destroy.

"For the idea, or ideal of Love, Self-sacrifice, Humanity united in love, in brotherhood, in peace—all this is dead. There is no arguing about it. It is dead. The great ideal is dead."

The time had come for Gótzsche and me to go back to our cabin, and when we said good night to the Lawrences and stepped out of the house, out into the clear starlit winter night, walking in the snow among the tall majestic pine trees, I felt as though I were coming out of a morgue into Nature's lofty cathedral—into Nature itself, the great teacher. In Nature there is destruction, but there is also creation and hope. And one often felt so utterly hopeless about Lawrence and his ideas.

All this devastation, destruction and death—death—he breathed death, spake and saw death everywhere, and only darkness, the darkness of death. And when he spoke of new creations, his creations, his gods, his souls, his ideas, they were always shrouded in darkness not yet visible.

"The only thing one can stick to is one's isolate being and the god in whom it is rooted. And the only thing to look to is the god who fulfils one from the dark. And the only thing to wait for is for men to find this aloneness and their god in the darkness. Then one can meet as worshippers in a sacred contact in the dark."

Yet he wanted to be a leader. He believed deeply that he was "telling the *truth*, not merely an aesthetic truth that would satisfy any creative artist, but a truth that would solve all human problems at their source."

"All men say they want a leader," is what he said. "It's the deep, fathomless submission to the heroic soul in another man—life submission."

And he spoke of the destiny of mankind, of all mankind, and said:

"Man is like this. He has various levels of consciousness. When he is broken, killed at one level of consciousness, his very death leaves him on a higher level. And this is the soul in its entirety, being conscious, super-conscious, far beyond mentality. It hardly needs eyes or ears. It is clairvoyant and clairaudient. And man's divinity, and his ultimate power, is in this super-consciousness of the whole soul. Not in brute force, not in skill or intelligence alone. But in the soul's extreme power of knowing and then willing. On this alone hangs the destiny of all mankind."

We reached our cabin, and as we had been away most of the day, it was almost as cold inside it as out. So the first thing we did was to build a huge blazing fire in the fireplace. It was still early evening. The Lawrences always went to bed early, but we usually stayed up till eleven or even as late as one o'clock in the morning. And after just leaving Lawrence, one wasn't fit to sleep right away anyhow. One's emotions and thoughts were deep at sea or in a pell-mell. So we generally sat up and talked about Lawrence and pondered over his ideas, trying to straighten out his thoughts in our minds and to soothe our emotions before going to bed and attempting to sleep.

We would in the main agree, but also disagree. I thought I understood Lawrence fairly well, but often discovered there was much I didn't understand. I could see the truth also in his most destructive statements and agreed to myself that even in destruction there could be creation; if not in the same stroke, it would invariably be in the next.

None of us believed in Lawrence as a leader of men. I don't think that was his real nature—that is, in the ordinary

sense of the word, like a Christ or a Marx. He was more of a seer or a prophet. And how could he be a leader of men? He contradicted himself at almost every turn. He did not believe in dogmas or doctrines, but he made them himself anyhow, only to break them sooner or later.

Though he was a great soul and a leader in a way, he could not lead. But even so, one could have only the deepest admiration for him. One could not escape his influence either. Despite his shortcomings, he had a superiority that one could not deny and one had to admit that he had both strengthened and released something in one's life for which one could have only the deepest veneration.

Well, as time wore on into the small hours of the morning, our emotions calmed down and our minds tired, and so we went to bed to continue on Lawrence and life's problems in our sleep. But before the oblivion of sleep overtook me, I memorized for myself what Lawrence said of himself.

Lawrence said: "I believe:

"That I am I.

"That my soul is a dark forest.

"That my known self will never be more than a little clearing in the forest.

"That gods, strange gods, come forth from the forest into the clearing of my known self, and then go back.

"That I must have the courage to let them come and go.

"That I will never let mankind put anything over on me, but that I will try always to recognize and submit to the gods in me and the gods in other men and women.

"There is my creed. He who runs may read. He who prefers to crawl, or to go by gasoline, can call it rot."

Even though I go by gasoline, I don't call it rot, but agree. And when he says that his known self will never be more than a little clearing in the forest, I must admit to myself that all I can do is just to have a little peek into that clearing and hope to be able to give a wee bit of that wonderful view in return.

In great earnest, Lawrence said one day at our cabin after we had had our tea and were relaxing:

"I feel I could kill and that I should enjoy doing it."

That, of course, we could not contradict. And when he said it, I was sure that that was the way he felt. He had said it so often before. But when he said:

"And why not, why not let *us* go out and kill—not the innocent animals, but some of the beastly humans——"

Then we protested; *we* did not have the urge to murder our fellow-men. And so he told me I was already a killer, shooting the innocent little rabbits. And that morally it should be ten times easier to kill a despicable human being, and much more important.

So I said: "Here on the ranch it is more important for *us* to kill a rabbit so we might have some fresh meat to eat—for I don't suppose you want me to kill a human being and bring him to you to prepare for supper. And why not, why wouldn't it fit in with some of your primitive ideas to also believe in cannibalism?"

He grinned, but did not answer. Apparently it was beside the point he wanted to discuss, but I didn't want to be called a killer, so I said: "I am no more a killer than you are. You kill nice small mice in a trap and cut the necks of cute little chickens."

But nevertheless he maintained, "It is more important for us to kill some of the beastly disdainful bankers, industrialists, lawyers, war makers and schemers of all kinds."

I said I thought enough killing had been done in the war.

"Quite," he said, "but I don't want to kill at random as in a war. Men go to war and slaughter indiscriminately with a feeling of exalted righteousness, but I want to be select and to pick the scum and parasitic fungus of mankind and kill them for the benefit of the world at large to save humanity."

To encourage the interest in the point he had taken, I gave in and agreed that there are a lot of people who should be disposed of for the benefit of humanity. And for some time he went on on the subject of killing. And to lead him on I said: "There is no time like the present. If we are to start killing, why not begin right now?"

"Yes, you are quite right," he answered.

"Whom will you kill first?" I asked.

He hesitated for a moment, then he said slowly and with emphasis: "I will kill Mabel first."

In denouncing the will of parasitic humans, he had talked himself into hate.

But I went on: "Do you want to shoot her with a gun?"

"No, you can all keep your nasty guns, the product of the hideous machine industrialism, the weapon of cowardice."

"What then?" I continued. "Will you strangle her with your hands?"

"No," he said calmly, "I will use a knife!"

"To stab her with," I complied.

"No," he said, growing pale, "*I will cut her throat!*"

In my mind I saw the picture he had copied from Piero di Cosimo's *Death of Procris*, and thought to myself he wanted to experience that picture.

I did not entice him any further. I thought we had already gone too far. Luckily, Mabel was some twenty miles away.

I remembered a statement to the effect that the borderline between madman and genius is sometimes indistinguishable, or as Aristotle said, "No excellent soul is exempt from a mixture of madness," and at times I thought Lawrence capable of anything.

One of the last weeks we were at the Del Monte Ranch, Lawrence received a message from the post office in Alamosa, in the state of Colorado, just across the New Mexican border, saying that an insured parcel was being held there for him. Evidently he had to go and get it himself. Why we had to go to Colorado for that parcel I don't remember; we always had our mail from Taos or from Questa.

Well, we decided it was too far to go on horseback—about seventy miles—and so, with much fuss, got Lizzie started. As none of us had been in that part of the country before, we all joined in the trip. We got off to an early start in the morning. There was lots of snow and the road was none too good; the weather didn't look too promising either. It seemed as though a snowstorm was brewing. But we started anyway and made the trip through the forest all right, and safely descended the winding road down the mountain-side.



Desert and mountains, New Mexico, 1922

At the Mexican village we asked for directions and started into new country unknown to us. It was cold and cloudy, but we sang our favourite songs, as usual. We drove in the foothills for a while and then descended into Sunshine Valley, a vast barren desert plateau. It seemed like an endless waste, covered with snow and spotted by dots of sagebrush. Heavy dark clouds were hanging low overhead and the landscape looked desolate and gloomy.

Lawrence ridiculed its name, "Sunshine Valley," and instantly rechristened it "Death Valley." Snow began to sprinkle and a cold wind was blowing from the mountains, and before we realized it, we were caught in a blizzard. The wind howled through the flimsy curtains of our flivver, and the snow started to collect on the windshield, impairing visibility. We seriously considered turning about and returning home, but we finally decided to take a chance on going ahead.

As it was freezing, the road, or rather the trail, was hard, and with our skid chains on the tires, we had but little trouble in making headway in the falling snow. Now and then we passed, at a distance, a lonely settlement in this seemingly endless waste of desolation.

We wondered how these people made a living. There seemed to be nothing but barrenness. The gloomy, lonely cabins looked like rocks protruding in a flat waste of snow. There was not even a single tree to break the sharpness of the icy wind, increasing its own momentum as it tore across the table-land.

As we went deeper into this "valley of death," as Lawrence called it, our songs ceased. We could not even sing "The Little Brown Jug," which we liked so much:

"My wife and I liv'd all alone,
In a little log hut we call'd our own;
She lov'd gin and I lov'd rum—
I tell you what, we'd lots of fun.
Ha-ha-ha, you and me,
Little brown jug, don't I love thee.
Ha-ha-ha, you and me,
Little brown jug, don't I love thee."

The cold became more intense and the icy wind went right through our clothes. We shivered and froze and our teeth chattered so in our mouths we could hardly speak. Grimly we went on in silence.

Lizzie seemed faithful for once. Constantly she hammered on all fours and steadily we rattled on to the ringing tune of our chiming chains. We all agreed it was one of the severest colds we had ever experienced. Luckily, the snowfall soon abated, which made the trip less hazardous, but the wind seemed to increase in velocity. Once in a while we simply had to stop the car to get out and stamp our feet on the ground, hammer our arms against our bodies and chase one another, running around the car, to try to keep warm and get circulation into our blood. We also opened the hood of the car and warmed our hands over the engine.

When we reached Colorado, there was a clearing in the sky; and when we finally reached the post office, the sun was shining brightly. But when we gazed back toward our homes below Lobo Mountain, we discovered we could not see Lobo peak. It was surrounded by clouds, and looked like a storm was raging in the mountains.

Lawrence got his parcel and we barely allowed ourselves time to get warmed up at the post office stove before we departed, for we wanted to get a good start on our return trip before a new storm came up. We were afraid of getting stuck in the forest below our cabins, as a storm evidently was on by the looks of the heavy clouds surrounding Lobo peak.

We got safely across the valley, with only a sprinkle of snowflakes now and then, but the raw, terrific wind and the fierce, biting cold had increased rather than abated.

Lawrence's mood was like the weather—with a frigid outburst now and then, shouting through chattering teeth, the sound of hard ebony bone banged together, the clatter of the cranium. He talked about death and desolation. But he was not challenged by any of us as we were benumbed by the icy wind that pierced through the skin to the very bone. We felt like skeletons huddled in cold meat in a carcass and wrapped in a bundle of rags.

We reached our neighbouring Mexican village safely and we felt almost at home. We stopped at the grocery store to warm up and to get some grub for our pantry. We were told it had snowed quite a bit up in our mountains, and as it looked as though we would get more of it, we didn't hesitate before starting on our last lap.

It was in the middle of the afternoon with a couple of hours of daylight ahead. We had San Cristobal behind us and started up on our first real grade. We were almost at the top when a descending vehicle approached us on this very narrow road, cut in the side of the mountain. On our left was the mountain wall and on our right there was a precipice several hundred feet deep.

The vehicle coming towards us was a wood wagon, pulled by mules and driven by a Mexican. There was only a sparse falling of snowflakes, so our visibility was good. In low gear we approached the meeting point slowly. Gótzsche was at the wheel. There was just enough room for two cars to pass, with little to spare. The Mexican was on the safe side and was too liberal to himself with his half of the road. As he didn't seem to yield, Gótzsche gave him a courteous honk of the horn, but that seemed to have the opposite effect. So Gótzsche drove as close to the wagon as he could—so close that, from my side, it seemed as though a collision was unavoidable. But he had a couple of inches to spare.

He had asked me on the recumbent side how much he was off the edge of the incline and I said smartly: "Plenty of room, six inches to spare." And I hadn't more than said it before the shoulder of the road gave way and both the right wheels slid with the dirt and gravel over the rim of the steep incline with a jerk. The car halted for a moment, but then very slowly started to slide over the edge.

There was the abyss below and death, or, worse still, the prospect of our being crippled for life. The car was almost at the point of turning over, falling and rolling down the precipice. Miraculously, it stopped, in a tilted position, at this point, but still the ground could give way and the car would undoubtedly turn over and start rolling.

I was in the front seat of the car, on the sloping side, and best able to estimate the situation. As there were no doors on the left side of our old touring car, we could not get out on that side, that is, without a lot of fuss, and the commotion might cause the car to lose balance and topple down.

Lawrence was behind me in the back seat, and I told him to shift into Frieda's lap very carefully and all of them to move gently as close to the left side of the car as possible, so as to concentrate the weight on the wheels on the road to guarantee the balance, and thereby also relieve the pressure on the loose ground on the ramp and further insure our safety.

Then I crawled out of the car to investigate, and found that the housing on the rear axle had a hold on the ground and had stopped the car from rolling over. However, the ground could still give way and then the car would go down with the avalanche. I got up on the left running board to give further weight on the wheels to secure the balance, and told Lawrence to come out and take my place.

When we had travelled with the car, Frieda always kept her seat patiently, without any comment, but this time she asked, "But what will I do?" I told her just to sit tight, as her weight was necessary for traction on the rear wheel. Gótzsche, too, kept his seat in the front. With Frieda directly over the rear wheel and Lawrence on the far end of the running-board, the tire should be able to bite the ground.

I told Gótzsche to start the car and slowly put it into low gear and then I would push. The car moved forward a few inches and then stopped. We tried again with the same result. The housing of the rear axle dragging on the ground made it pretty hard for the car to move. Then I looked around for a pole or something similar, but could find nothing, so I took the axe we always carried in the car and chopped off a stake from a tree. I shoved that under the axle to pry and lift with, and got Lawrence down from the running-board to push, and we tried again.

This time we gained quite a bit before the car stalled. It was repeated a few times and we were safely back on the

road. Lawrence didn't say much, curse or make any fuss, but willingly obeyed orders. I don't know whether Frieda really was fully aware of the danger; at any rate, she was wonderfully calm. All she said was: "That was a narrow escape, wasn't it?" as Lawrence and I got back into the car.

We continued towards home, talking about the incident, really blaming the Mexican who had hogged the road on the safe side. He didn't even stop to offer us assistance but perhaps he really didn't realize our plight.

Despite the fallen snow, we made good progress until we were well inside the mountain forest where the snow was deeper, and then we often got stuck. But we took it all good-naturedly, just as a matter of routine. We got out the axe and chopped some branches off the pine trees and stuck them under the wheels; also a spade to shovel snow.

Frieda was freezing and, knowing from experience that it might take some time to get going, then only to get stuck again, she said she would walk home and prepare supper for us. We were about fifteen to twenty minutes' walk away from our cabins. And so she hitched up her skirt and plodded on in the deep snow; alone she mushed her way towards home.

Is it any wonder that Frieda said: "It was the most trying old Lizzie that ever went along the road. She coughed and trembled at the tiniest hill; she stuck and had to be shoved; she was a trial."

We got the car clear, and got stuck a couple of times more, but caught up with Frieda at the boundaries of the ranch and picked her up. So we all arrived safely at our cabins as the sun was setting in the west, colouring the heavy snow clouds in the spectrum of the rainbow.

As always when we had been on a whole day's trip together, Gótzsche and I ate supper at the Lawrences'. And as soon as we got in, we started our teamwork. Lawrence and Gótzsche went to the kitchen to prepare the food, Frieda set the table, and I tended the fires. After supper we settled ourselves in the cosiness of home. With a full stomach and a warm body, it was nice to be alive, and especially considering the day's experience. Twice

across the "valley of death" in the bitterest cold, not to forget looking death itself in the face at the bottom of the abyss. It sort of made us feel closer together.

Some months later, when I was in California, and Lawrence by then in Europe, it happened that I saw an article in a paper that I had wrapped some of my things in. My eyes fell on the headline, "News from Sunshine Valley," and I remembered our bitter experience. I read it and found it to be a grossly deceiving real estate ballyhoo, and I am sure Lawrence would have thought the same. I cut it out to send to him, but somehow it never went off and now it has popped up among my letters. Here it is as it appeared:

NEWS FROM SUNSHINE VALLEY

By A. D. GALLOWAY

SUNSHINE VALLEY, N.M.—We are still basking in a flood of sunshine, with snow-capped mountains on every side, creating a volume of scenery a person never forgets nor tires of. Is it any wonder artists from all corners of the globe seek this part of the country for material for their profession? The shades and color effects are such that it is difficult even for the professional artist to reproduce their grandeur. One noted artist, now residing in Taos, N. M., made the statement to me recently that he made several trips in the hills before he was able to get his color to correspond with nature as revealed here in one of the most scenic places in the land.

Progress on the big canal is going right along, with thirty-nine teams and over forty men pushing the work, constructing bridges and flumes for other laterals to cross our main ditch, which is nearing completion as far as Cabresto creek.

The second snow of about ten inches is being absorbed by the soil and is making the outlook for some spring crops very encouraging. An abundance of snow in the mountains will assure plenty of water for irrigation for the coming season.

Being one of the first settlers in the Sunshine district, I have observed the progress and development of The

Great Divide Sunshine Valley colony from a land of sage brush to a valley dotted with settlers everywhere. Standing in my own door yard I have twenty-five settlers in sight in my immediate neighborhood.

The question might arise, why are we here? The answer is plain. Because we have more natural resources than any place that I have ever seen. We have a climate that is hard to beat; sunshine nearly every day in the year; plenty of timber near by, such as saw timber for lumber on the reserve at \$1 per thousand; good cedar posts at 3-4 cents each, dead and down timber for fuel, etc., quaking aspen poles for sheds, fences, corrals, etc., free by getting a permit from the forest ranger, which he is glad to grant to any settler for domestic use; mountains that abound in minerals of nearly every character. There are fine locations on the Red River and the Rio Grande for power plants. As to outdoor recreations, we have them within driving distance from our homes, and picnic or camping grounds of nearly every description, from cool, shady nooks by a cool sparkling stream of pure water to warm, sunny places along the Rio Grande, with plenty of trout fishing and game hunting. The soil is the most productive in the country and is underlaid with an abundance of pure, soft water at a depth of from twenty to thirty-five feet.

Since settling here I have seen wheat produced fifty-five bushels to the acre, and rye that made over thirty bushels per acre. The rye was grown without irrigation. I have seen turnips grown that weighed seventeen pounds, and berry bushes and fruit trees loaded to the limit with delicious fruit.

Taking it all in all, I consider it a fit place for a man to establish his permanent home.

We had been shopping in the Mexican village—Gótzsche, Lawrence and I—and were just starting for home when we were accosted by a Mexican whom we didn't know. As he spoke Spanish, Gótzsche and I did not know what he was saying, but Lawrence listened attentively and patiently to what he had to say. Lawrence didn't understand all of it, but this much he got out of it: the Mexican's daughter was dead and he wanted us to follow him. And as the

Mexican was begging us to come, Lawrence said to us: "Let's go with him."

And so we followed the Mexican to a small house and were led into a room with whitewashed walls. At the opposite end from where we entered was a bed, and on the wall above it were an oilprint picture of the Madonna and various other Catholic paraphernalia. We halted inside the door, but the Mexican walked up to the bed and motioned us to come, too, and so we took off our hats and joined him at the bedside.

In the bed was a corpse of a girl, all dressed in white and decorated with flowers. She was about twelve years old and very beautiful, just in the bud of womanhood. She hardly looked dead—more as though she were asleep. The sleep of the innocent virgin, almost with a smile on her lips, the utmost expression of contentment.

The Mexican talked to Lawrence about the daughter. The Danes were absorbed in feelings of solemn respect and awe; for youth, for beauty and for womanhood in death. Lawrence said to us: "We must stay a little while and look at her, or her father will be disappointed."

After a while we left and the Mexican thanked us for coming with him. On our return home, Lawrence talked all the way about the beautiful young girl, about her father, about death, and the Mexican's devotion to Catholicism. The incident had made a deep impression on Lawrence and on us, too, for that matter. Perhaps I was too pre-occupied with my own thoughts and feelings to really hear and absorb all that Lawrence said, for I don't remember any of it in detail. I wish I did! But the meeting of death, in youth and beauty, made a greater impression than did the words of Lawrence.

Probably the last thing that Lawrence commissioned me to do for him while at the Del Monte Ranch was to return a painting to an artist in Taos. This artist had called on Lawrence while he lived at Mabel's place and had brought one of his paintings, a group of yellow cottonwood trees against a blue, blue sky, and presented it as a gift to Lawrence, against his wishes.

The painting had been hidden away in one of the empty trunks and now, as we were soon to leave, the trunks had been brought forth to be inspected and aired, and the picture, completely forgotten, was brought to light.

The question of what to do with it came up, as none of them cared for it nor wanted to keep it. Frieda wanted to give it away, but Lawrence said he would return the picture to the artist, and asked me to do it for him.

"You can't do that," said Frieda. "It will hurt the man's feelings."

Gótzsche and I sided with her. But Lawrence maintained: "If I do not want the picture, the proper thing to do is to return it."

"Oh, why must you always go out of your way to insult people?" said Frieda disgustedly. "Give it to someone who will be glad to have it."

"I don't feel I have a right to do that," said Lawrence. "I never really accepted it."

"Well, you say you didn't," blurted Frieda, "but I know you did, and I scolded you for it, too. You accepted it all right, in your meek way, and was humble about it when he was there, but now that he is away you are very brave in your talk, but not brave enough to act and face the man. That you dare not, but like a coward ask Merrild to do it for you."

And to me she continued. "Don't you do it, Merrild. If it has to be done, let Lorenzo do it himself, and at least show that he is a man."

Lawrence insisted the picture could not be given away, because sooner or later the artist would find out and then it would insult him—as *we* called it—but it would also be embarrassing. Lawrence said he would rather insult the man now and save him from embarrassment later on.

But I said, "He won't be saved from that if I return it. And it will also be embarrassing for me."

"Then Gótzsche can do it," said Lawrence.

But Gótzsche laughed at the suggestion and flatly refused, emphasizing that it could not be done. But Lawrence insisted that the picture belonged to the artist and that he

was the proper person to decide what to do with it. And again he asked me to do it for him.

I thought that perhaps it would be the last mission he would ask of me here, and as I felt greatly indebted to him for what he had meant to me, I wouldn't want to refuse one of his last wishes and would be only too glad to do him a favour, so I said, "Well, if you are absolutely decided on it and think it the right thing to do, I will return the picture for you."

"Oh, you bully," said Frieda to him. "Don't you bully Merrild into doing it; you always condemn people for being bullies; you detest them for their bulliness, but you, you are the biggest bully of them all."

Lawrence paid no attention to her and instructed me what to say to the artist. "Will you thank him for letting us have the painting while we were here, we have enjoyed it very much."

"You liar," sneered Frieda. And to me, "Don't you do it, Merrild, don't let him bully you, that bully of bullies."

But we did not let her interrupt us, and Lawrence continued. "And then take him this book of mine in appreciation."

"Oh, you fool," cried Frieda, "as if you hadn't insulted the man enough. You refuse his gift and want him to accept yours. I do hope he will refuse your book."

"I know he won't!" Lawrence replied tersely.

I think he wrote a dedication in it, too, but I am not sure. He wrapped the picture and the book in a piece of paper and gave it to me, and I went off to fulfil my assignment.

The actual return of the picture to the artist was somewhat embarrassing, but not as much so as I had expected. Perhaps I alleviated my story a little bit, as I felt mitigation could only be to the good of all concerned, and because I thought the painter was a nice chap and I didn't want to hurt his feelings if I could help it. But then I also said to myself: "What of it?" Lawrence is like that to all of us, and roses *do* have thorns.

The episode, however, did not make the impression on

me that the argument about it did at the ranch. But I do remember very distinctly that the artist did *not* refuse the book but apparently was happy for it and bade me return his thanks and good wishes to the Lawrences.

The one thing that Lawrence never got tired of speaking of was the "new life" that he wanted to start or create. But that could not be accomplished in this dreaded civilized America and less in suicidal Europe. He wanted to find a place away from civilization where he felt that the possibility of its growth would be fairly secure. It was an old idea of his, but he had not yet found a suitable place for it, although he had circled half the globe in its pursuit. Now he thought the possibility might be in old Mexico. And he was determined to go down there in search for a place, and when he had found it we were to join him and Frieda there.

Sometimes he wanted this new life movement to be a colony, but when we began to discuss it in detail, he got scared. "Too many people," he said. The colony idea was then reduced to a small group only, but when he began to mention by name some of his friends, he became highly distrustful, and the group idea was reduced to include only the Lawrences and the Danes. The Trinity.

At the moment it was the only thing he was sure about—"ourselves." After all, we had already proved our ability to live together, and our life at Del Monte should be the foundation to continue on in Mexico. To get a small ranch and a bit of land, till the soil and, as he always said, "grow a few bananas." And then he ventured further: "When we have ourselves firmly established, then we can add one or two more of our friends at a time and let the thing grow slowly into full being, and the new life will grow and spread until it embraces the whole world."

It was the middle of March. The time for breaking up our aboriginal life and temporarily separating from the Lawrences was drawing nearer. Departure was knocking at the door. Lawrence had now made plans to be in Mexico City about the twentieth of March. We were making preparations to move. In the process of cleaning

up and packing there is always something to be left behind, and Gótzsche and I were given several things. I, for instance, got the blue duck pants, the kind that cowboys and Mexicans wear nowadays, that Lawrence had bought and used on the ranch. When washed they would be as good as new. And Frieda gave me her maroon-coloured woollen sweater. Then I got some books and several photographs—all the photos that Mabel had given them of herself, Tony, Indians and various others. Among them was a large 8×10 of Mabel, the one she had sent overseas to Lawrence. On the back it says: "Mabel Dodge 5 years ago just come to Taos." I have just found it among my things.

And last but not least, I got ROMA. Roma was a double suitcase that had been bought in Rome, Italy, in the early life of the Lawrences, and so had a story of its own; and it was not without sadness they left it with me to replace my old knapsack, bought in Dresden when I roamed in Germany the year of the War.

Both the Lawrences joined in memories about Roma. One becomes attached to things, even an old battered suitcase, but then it had carried their belongings half-way around the globe. With me, Roma eventually completed her world cruise back to Europe.

Whoever got the mail also brought the rancher's daily paper (not a local paper, but one of the large city editions from the Hearst chain). Often Lawrence went after the mail, and as our cabin was the outpost of the settlement, he would always stop in to see us. Mail or no mail, there would always be the folded daily paper for the rancher. Only occasionally have I seen Lawrence unfold that paper, and then not to read, but more as a game. He made great fun of the headlines. They were often a puzzle to him, and always to us. These were our crossword puzzles in those days and gave us many a laugh. Very rarely did I see Lawrence open the paper to read it, and neither did we. We agreed with him that the papers were largely filth, scandals, crime, ballyhoo and lies, evidently printed for morons and not worthy of any man's time to bother with.

And today they are, with a few exceptions, even worse,

an a b c in crime, gold digging and scandal, misrepresentation of facts, deliberate lies and a lot of ballyhoo and paid publicity stuff.

Lawrence might joke about headlines, but sometimes they were too serious to joke about and he would, deeply concerned, talk about humanity and the world and predict its collapse.

As Seligman has said, "Lawrence passes through our jerry-built and faithless society, a lover and a religious soul, recording its collapse."

When we have read or known Lawrence, we must agree, and when he said the following to me as far back as 1922, I wondered if he was right, but did not contradict him. In this and in other things he proved himself a prophet.

"There is a great change coming, bound to come, the whole money arrangement will undergo a change: What, I don't know. The whole industrial system will undergo a change. Work will be different and pay will be different. The owning of property will be different. Class will be different, and human relations will be modified and perhaps simplified. If we are intelligent, alert and undaunted, then life will be much better, more generous, more spontaneous, more vital, less loosely materialistic.

"As a novelist, I feel it is the change inside the individual which is my real concern. The great social change interests me and troubles me, but it is not my field. I know a change is coming—and I know we must have a more generous, more human system based on the life value and not on the money values. That I know. My field is to know the feelings inside a man, and to make new feelings conscious.

"Ahead of us lies a great social change, a great social readjustment."

The last few days we were together, Lawrence was more serious than ever. He saw darkness and death everywhere. And now that we were to part, he was eager to have us realize and to impress on us the falsity in the world to be avoided, and to point out the real life values to live by.

He had such friendly, even fatherly, concern for us, and it touched us deeply.

The day came for us to break up and to face the new and unknown. Ahead of us was change and readjustment, strange country and different conditions. We faced the new and unknown, full of expectancy, but at the same time it was not easy to sever our relations and to end our happy life. We realized how attached we had become to one another, to the place, the mountains, trees, animals and the troublesome but lovely white snow. But our destiny was to go on, and so we said good-bye to the rancher and his family.

We went to the corral to pat the horses we called our own—those nice animals we liked so much: Lady, Azul, Brownie and Pinto. We said good-bye to the cows and the pigs, the squirrels and chipmunks, magpies and blue jays.

Gótsche and I had already packed our things and loaded them on the running-board of Lizzie. And parked at the Lawrence gate, we finished the loading and tying on of Lawrence's things, and then we all took our seats in the car, our pets included. The huge Scotty Airedale sat between Gótsche and me and in the rear was tiny Pips on Lawrence's lap. Slowly we rolled by the big ranch house and waved a last good-bye to the rancher and his family, and soon we passed the outpost, the Danes' cabin (so called to this day), and then we slowed down to take a last look.

And behold, there was Mire (Meere), our wildcat, sitting on the roof! To say good-bye? No!—to watch the birds gathering the last crumbs we had spread for them in the snow.

And Frieda said, "Oh, there is poor Mire. She will miss you a lot. What will she do now?"

"The rancher will take care of her," said Lawrence.

"No, he won't!" said I. "We have asked him, and he said he had cats enough."

That troubled Lawrence and he said we should take her along with us to Taos. But that seemed impossible. We would soon have to leave Taos and we might not be able to find anybody who would adopt her; so I said she would be better off in the wilderness where she belonged, and be

a wildcat again. And to substantiate my opinion and to appease the Lawrences, I recalled the following story about Mire.

One day I was sitting by the kitchen window, watching the various kinds of birds that gathered to pick up their daily ration of crumbs I spread for them on the snow. I enjoyed and took great interest in studying all the birds and their habits. Then, out of nowhere, Mire with a graceful leap landed in the midst of them and captured one. Immediately I stormed out of the door to rescue the bird and punish Mire, but she had disappeared as suddenly as she came, with the prey in her mouth.

A few days later the same thing happened, and I could not figure out from where she came. I had full vision of the outside and yet I could not see her approach. So on the following days I watched very closely for Mire. Also, I had spread the food a little farther away from the house and so felt sure that the cat could not possibly advance without my seeing her. And then it happened again! To my horror and delight, there was the cat sailing high in the air, and in a perfect leap she landed on her prey. She had jumped from the roof of the house. I was amazed.

The next day when I went out to feed the birds, the puzzle was completely solved: there was Mire already on the roof, waiting. I threw snowballs at her and spread the crumbs beyond her leap.

"So you see," I said to Lawrence, "she not only knows how to kill, but she is also very clever. She can take care of herself, I am sure."

We said good-bye to Mire and left her to fate and her old life. She must be a wildcat now. Nobody wants her."

"Poor Mire," sighed Frieda, "but such is life."

And we rolled on through the forest, down the mountain slopes and across the desert to Taos.

As there was still much snow, and the mountain passes were blocked by it, Gótzsche and I decided not to attempt to reach California at this time of the year. We had planned to take a northern route and visit the Hopi and other Indian tribes and reservations on our way, and also to stop over at

the Grand Canyon in Arizona. So our plan for the time being was to stay in Taos and await better weather conditions.

We could have stayed at the ranch, but none of us wanted to. We felt everything would seem so empty and lonesome after the Lawrences' departure. There would be hundreds of things to remind us of them, and it would be sad that they were not there, but gone. We had also developed numerous habits together that would be broken when they left. And then, too, it would be more practical for us to be in Taos with our exhibition in Santa Fé coming on. Together we had started our primitive life at Del Monte, together we would end it!

In Taos we saw the Lawrences off for Mexico City, and parted. At the moment of farewell we were all gay and jolly. And Lawrence said: "We will meet soon again somewhere, of that I feel sure. So let us not say good-bye but auf wiedersehen."

And so, as they moved on, we exchanged a last smile and a hearty auf wiedersehen!

"Say au revoir,
But not good-bye,
This parting brings
A bitter sigh. . . ."

TAOS AGAIN

WE were in Taos again and on our own. We felt great relief in being alone, but also a deep bereavement. Every day since we had thrown our lot in with Lawrence we had mercilessly been drilled in thoughts and emotions, and now we felt need for a rest and wanted to relax from deep thought, ideas and concern about the world. We didn't want to do any excessive thinking or to be bothered about the problems of life and what was going on in the world. We wanted to shed everything for a while and give our mind and emotions a rest and just relax in a simple living.

But we soon found ourselves discussing the very things which, for the time being, we wanted to forget. How could we help it? Not only had we always been interested in social problems, *et al.*, but we were completely saturated with Lawrence. Only now we could discuss and ponder leisurely. It suited us better, as I think we were both rather slow thinkers and often became emotionally exhausted from the fierce intensity and deep sincerity with which Lawrence pierced one's innermost soul. Intellectually we were no match for Lawrence, we lacked his brilliance of mind and we did not possess his burning, inspiring fire. If he was a whole conflagration ignited by lightning, we were just a couple of slowly burning candles; but even the flame of a candle is a fire. Often when we had burned our candles down to our own conclusion, we discovered it had long since been answered by Lawrence, but at the time we had protested. But then we had to arrive our own way. He who walks also gets there!

People were very kind to us, that is, people who amounted to something. All winter we had been Lawrence's guests and now we were guests of the Ufers, although they were in the East. They had generously given us their house to live

in and to use as if it were our own, and also to use the wood in the shed for our fire.

We missed Lawrence and Frieda a great deal, but soon found ourselves occupied in our new surroundings. We painted more pictures than we had at the ranch; we painted every day, and in the evening we read with eagerness the many art magazines and periodicals, the very best, to which the Ufers subscribed. Lawrence was a contributor to some of them, we found. Ufer also had an extensive library of books, and also of phonograph recordings of opera and symphonic music, which we played with delight.

We had liked to sing folk music with the Lawrences, but we appreciated this phonograph too—the records were of the very best. Even if Ufer was not a radical painter and we could not accept his taste as an artist, he was nevertheless advanced in social thoughts, and we did approve of his taste in music. Although he might be called a hard, forceful and dominating person, a brute and a bully—there were, notwithstanding, many good sides to Ufer and we liked him.

Mrs. Ufer was his exact opposite. We always contended that she was a better painter than he, and that she also had a keener intellect. On the whole, she is a very fine person. In common, they are both warm-hearted and we liked them both very much, and have much to thank them for.

In a couple of days we had our first message from Lawrence. A postal card from El Paso:

“EL PASO, *Wednesday*.

To KNUD MERRILD.

We cross over this morning—a lazy journey so far—a woman on the train is taking her *cat* to Mexico: poor pussy in this baggage van, not very happy.—Grüsse,

D. H. L.

Postage to Mexico costs same as in U.S.A.—letters two cents. Already it is hot.—D. H. L.”

I can see Lawrence being concerned about the poor pussy. That is just like him; he liked animals so much.

At the time, I wrote the following:

"We painted every day, and very often we had Indians to pose for us. We started with difficulties almost right away. One of our first models was a young Indian girl. She had posed two afternoons for us and had daily received the customary fee of one dollar for a half-day's posing. The third day she came to our studio accompanied by her brother. They demanded that we pay double, as we painted two pictures, one each. We had a hard time explaining to them that her work of posing was the same whether she posed for one or for ten painters. We bickered about it for some time. But the smart brother contended that there would be no more posing for both of us unless we paid the double fee, and as we refused to accept that term, and only offered the customary dollar, they left.

"We might have agreed to pay a little more, but for two reasons we couldn't. First, we could hardly afford to have models at all, as our resources were very low; second, because we wanted to be in solidarity with our fellow-artists, as nearly all the artists we came in contact with asked us not to pay any more, as the Indians would always try to get more from newcomers, and often would get it, too, and so make trouble for the residing artists, as the models would strike for higher wages and demand as much as visiting artists had paid them—sometimes double the amount. My impression was that the artists didn't get along so well with each other, but on the model question they certainly stuck tight. And it is no wonder. The model's fee is the largest expense, and I am sure in some cases the fee would exceed the price that a lesser-known painter would get for his picture.

"A few days later, however, our girl model came back alone, unsolicited, and said in her simple, bashful way:

"'I pose, one dollar day, all right.'

"And so we resumed our work, and never had any further trouble with her or any other models.

"It interested us to talk with our models—that is the men—if we could get them to talk at all. All the women were so bashful that it was impossible to carry on a conversation.

"Gótzsche and I always carried on the conversation between us in Danish, and the Indians would remark in their simple way:

"'You speak other lingo, you other tribe, you no Gringo' (Mexican slang for an American).

"We told them we came from Denmark, but that meant nothing to them. They just shook their heads. Then we said: 'from Scandinavia,' but still 'no savvy.' Then we simply told them: 'Our tribe live to the east, way up north—other side of big water. Europe! Europe!'

"'Ah,' was the reply, and invariably they would ask if we had been in the big war, and if we knew Kaiser Bill, big war chief. As we didn't altogether want to disappoint them, we said that we hadn't been to the war, because our tribe was no longer on the warpath, but that our tribe, the great Vikings, had been very brave warriors in the olden days just like the Indians, but no fight any more. Viking tribe small now like Indian tribe. We knew Kaiser Bill all right, but he was not a brave chief, he vamoosed when it got too hot for him. They shook their heads in disappointment and said: 'Too bad, no good, no good; brave chief not run away!'

"One thing all our models had in common was their sleepiness, and that made it hard for them to hold the pose. One fellow not only got sleepy, but ever so often actually fell into sleep and broke the pose. To keep him awake, we asked him to sing and to beat the drum he was posing with. Hesitantly and bashfully he started, but as he felt we were absorbed in our work, he soon too became absorbed in his music and worked himself into a higher and higher pitch, and with furious passion he sang and pounded the drum so that it was impossible for us to concentrate on our painting. We never asked him again.

"Because we were of another tribe, and not Gringos, the Indians felt we had something in common with them, and we soon gained their confidence. We were often invited to their homes in the pueblo and proudly introduced: 'my friend, artist, other side, big water, up north.' But though we were friendly and had a certain amount of confidence,

we did not get to know the real Indian, except on the surface. Essentially we remained strangers to one another. They think and feel differently than we do. There is always a blank somewhere. Really to know the Indian, I believe one must have been raised among them."

At the time I did not know the expression, "Indian giver," but I do now. This is what happened and as I wrote it then:

"One day our model gave me his drum, a new drum. I liked it very much, but told him I could not accept such a gift from him.

"'Oh yes,' he said, 'you my friend, I will be very sorry if you do not take it. You my friend, I made it for you.'

"As I had done him several favours, I thought for a moment that he was sincere. I was touched, and upon his insistence I accepted the gift.

"After he had been posing for some time, he said to me:

"'You give me something, too——'

"'Oh, I see,' I said to myself, and to him: 'I don't know of anything that I have that could be of any value to you,' and hesitatingly, 'unless it be money. But if you accept money, I can't regard it as a gift, but only as business.'

"He protested vigorously and maintained that even if I should decide to give him money, it would still be a gift and, as he said:

"'I can easily sell the drum next summer to the tourists, but I won't do that, I have made the drum for you, my friend, for you personally. I have put my spirit into it, and when you strike it my soul come to you. You are my friend, you are my brother, my drum is good luck to you. The drum is yours, I cannot sell it, you give me little or even nothing, you keep drum. I am always your friend, your brother.'

"'You are all right, my friend,' I said, smiling, and patted him on his shoulder. 'I am sorry I have only beastly money to give you. Here is five bucks, I know it is not enough, but hope you will not refuse this measly gift in return.'

"He nodded satisfied, and in a low voice said:

“‘The good spirits of the Indians will always guard you!’

“Business trick? Friendship? I don’t know. But maybe I would have found out if I in return for the drum had given him a box of matches and solemnly told him that as I strike the drum to be blessed by the Indian spirit so he must strike a match, and through the flame be assured of burning friendship, and the light will throw upon him the blessing of my tribe and destroy all evil spirits.

“Later I got another gift, a beautiful war bonnet, a head-gear made of black eagle feathers, not turkey! That gift cost me fifteen dollars.”

Lawrence had planned to be in Mexico City around March 20th. They actually arrived Friday night, March 23rd, 1923. I had another postal card from him.

“HOTEL MONTE CARLO,
AV. URUGUAY 69,
MEXICO CITY,
Saturday.

To KNUD MERRILD.

Arrived wearily last night—went to a big American hotel—didn’t like it at all—found this little Italian hotel, very nice. Mexico very pleasant, rather like South Italy, but I feel a bit shut in, after the ranch. But the whole atmosphere is easy, and alive: a bit of rain, too—not at all hot, but nice and warm. I think we are going to like it.

D. H. L.

So good to have a flask of Chianti at one’s elbow again.—
D. H. L.”

We were not alone in Ufer’s house. With us were two of our companions from Del Monte. Scotty, of course, and as the Lawrences could not take Pipsey along to Mexico, we “owned” Pips for the third time—a problematical ownership which we were becoming accustomed to without really accepting it.

We had a lot of fun with the two dogs. Scotty was in his own home now and Pipsey was very jealous. She was getting fatter; was she in a family way?

A couple of days after the Lawrences had left, I met one

of the Taos painters on the street. To my consternation he told me that Pips belonged to him, and that he was coming over to get her.

I was startled over his attitude and his story. He said Mabel had first given Pips to him, then taken her back and given her to Lawrence, who was to have her only as long as he was in New Mexico, and, as it really wasn't his property, he couldn't give Pips away to us, and as Lawrence had now left, the dog was again his property and had been so all the time. I was perplexed, but told him that his intended visit would be of no use.

Imagine my amazement; I was altogether astonished when he really came into our house the next morning—not so much that he came, but that he had the impudence to try to steal Pips in my presence. He was a husky six-footer, seemingly strong, strong as a bear, but for the moment I forgot that and myself as my blood started to boil; like the heathen Viking warrior I felt the fury of a berserk, and grabbing him by the neck and pants, threw him out of the house. I placed myself in the open door and with clenched fists dared him to come back and try again. He was taken by surprise and went away.

I wrote Lawrence about all this, whereupon he answered:

“MEXICO CITY,
HOTEL MONTE CARLO,
11 April, 1923.

DEAR MERRILD—Your letters this morning—what a schweinerei that Taos is—how glad I am I need not smell them any more. Poor Pips. You must do as you think best with her: anyhow I'm glad . . . got a slap in the eye. But Mexico would never do for Bubastis—it's so different. She'd be dead in a month. Afraid Taos is her place.—This is a picture of Johnson and me going down the steps of the great Pyramid at Teotihuacan. He—Johnson—is sick, and staying in the American hospital here for a week: nothing serious. We are going on a tour tomorrow, to Puebla, Tehuacan, Orizaba. I want to find a house. A rich Englishwoman offers us one in Cozoacan, a suburb here. But I'd rather be

further away from this noisy—but rather pleasant city. I hope you'll be able to come down. I'll tell you more definitely our plans next week. Spit on Taos for me.

D. H. L."

After receiving this letter, Gótzsche and I went into a conference regarding Pips. Even though the dog had been given us several times, and therefore perhaps we still regarded Lawrence as the owner, it now seemed very doubtful that he would ever again want or be able to adopt her, and we felt she was now definitely on our hands. We had a great fancy for her and would have liked to take her along to California, but as we could expect bull-dale pups on the way, and as we did not know where to land, perhaps with a carload of pups, we decided to leave her behind. "Afraid Taos is her place!"

As she was unhappy in the company of Scotty, and soon would be a mother, we decided that the sooner she got a new home the better. About her new owner we soon agreed. The painter who so greatly desired her would be the logical owner, and thereby we would solve all problems and misunderstanding. Despite the unfortunate incident, we really had nothing against our colleague, and so I went to his studio. I told him he could have Pipey, not by his own right, but simply because we had to give her up due to unavoidable circumstances. I had brought Pips along, and when I left, she was in the lap of her new owner, all muddled up in new love, learning a new pet name.

Bibbles, alias Pips and Pebbles, Bambino, Bipsey, Bubastis had come to an end!

I developed a new friendship in Taos. This time it was an old painter by the name of Sass. He was about seventy years old, I think. He was a great traveller, and some months later, Lawrence ran into him in Mexico. He mentioned it in a letter to Bynner thus: "We ran across old Sass from Taos in Guadalajara plaza—like a lost chicken, and unable to get any word out."

I will elucidate a little on Sass because I don't think Lawrence's statement is quite fair, and because I think he was



Knud Merrild and Scotty, Taos, New Mexico,
1922

a fine personality and deserves better. I liked him very much, so much so that I gave him a big part in my diary. I wrote:

"Sass is an old painter, about seventy, I should judge, tall and well built and with the agility of a young man. His full-grown beard and hair are white as snow. He goes mostly barehead and barefoot, in sandals and dressed in khaki. The colony looks upon him as a queer fellow and he is left mostly to himself.

"How I made his acquaintance I don't remember, but we often, almost daily, went on long walks together. He told me pieces of his life history, his mode of living and philosophy. He lived alone in an old adobe house in the Mexican quarter on the outskirts of Taos. One day he invited me to have lunch with him. His abode was very primitive, even more so than our cabin in the mountains. We at least had a plank floor; he had only the bare stamped adobe ground. In the biggest room, his studio, was only an old dilapidated table, and some boxes to sit on. He asked me to be seated, after he had placed several paper bags on the table, and bade me help myself to lunch. In the bags were various kinds of nuts and some apples, and in an earthen jug *aqua pura*. I told him I liked fruits and nuts very much but didn't think it was quite substantial enough for a meal.

"'Look at me,' he said, 'I am in good health, in fine condition and feel absolutely pink.' I had to agree. 'Most people,' he said, 'dig their own grave with their fork. Some day you will realize the truth I am telling you.'

"As we were sitting there cracking nuts, I noticed a funny scaffold-like contraption by the window. About five feet diagonally away from the window was a wooden horse. Some boards were resting on its end and on the windowsill, making a sort of table, a draughting table perhaps, only I couldn't see why the boards should protrude a couple of feet beyond the French double hung window into the open. So I asked what he used it for.

"'It's my bed,' he said. 'In the daytime I can use it as a table, and at night I prop the window open with a stick and make it into a bed with blankets.'

“‘But why be right in the draught?’ said I. ‘Couldn’t you get another horse, or sleep on the floor?’

“‘No,’ he said, ‘I have lived so much in the outdoors that I can hardly sleep under a roof, so I lie with my head outside the window, so I can look into the stars and also get plenty of fresh air.’

“‘It was the queerest bedstead I had ever seen!

“One Friday evening when I was out for a walk, I thought I would drop in on Sass. It was about eight o’clock when I approached his house, and from a short distance noticed there was no light. I thought then that he wasn’t in, halted and started to turn about, but just then I heard low moans and a scratching noise. I stood still and listened. My first thought was that some Hermanos Disciplinantes of the Los Hermanos Penitentes order was practising whipping or flogging of himself as penance, as we were within the sacred forty days of Lent, when these hideous and atrocious practices went on, up to and including the Holy Week of Easter, where the flagellation culminated in crucifixion. As I listened more intently, I found that the moaning came from the direction of Sass’ house. If I should happen to come upon a penitente I had to be extremely careful not to be seen or it would be just too bad for me. Very cautiously I proceeded to sneak closer to investigate. Then I stopped abruptly.—There in the starlit night and a moon in its first quarter, I saw the head of Sass. It looked as though he were beheaded, lying there on the shelf. His thin white hair waved in the cold breeze, and his beard was sticking up in the air, calling to the stars. He was moaning and struggling. I ran up to help him. There he was on his curious bed, but pinned under the window frame that was resting on his throat. Inside the window his body was squirming, and his hands were working desperately to raise the frame, but in his awkward position, he did not have the strength to do so.

“Quickly I went to his assistance, got the window up and rescued the half-strangled man. He was none the worse for his accidental experiment, however. In his sleep he had evidently pushed away the stick that held the

window open, and so, like the blade of the guillotine, the frame of the window slid down on his throat and pinned him to the sill. It had happened only a short time before I came along and, as he said, it had been 'a very annoying situation.'"

Curiously enough, it was the first time I ever visited Sass in the evening, and also the last, because, as we say in Danish, he retired with the chickens. Sass was content to confine himself to the simplest in life. He craved so little. Even as an artist, he showed this restraint both in his motives and in the size of his work. His pictures were seldom larger than the lid of a cigar box. As to motive, most of the pictures I saw were simply a vast barren desert or prairie scene with a lone Indian standing, absorbed in thoughts, viewing a white sun-bleached cranium of a buffalo, half-buried in the sand. They were all just draughts or preliminary colour sketches. He made numerous sketches and studies of a cranium he had found in the desert.

"But some day," he said, "I will paint the big picture."

Sass was far from being extravagant, but Mother Nature had not been extravagant either, when she had bestowed his talents on him. However, he used it sincerely and to the best of his ability, and that, I think, is a lot.

He didn't stay long in any place or town. Some days he would vanish and disappear as suddenly as he had come and without leaving a trace. Preparation for departure didn't take him long. He would just roll up some blankets, gather a few bags of nuts and fruit and fill his desert bag with water, load it all on the back of his burro and be ready. And so with a knapsack on his own back and stick in hand, he would wander off, alongside his donkey, into the vast endless desert. There he would wander about and live, week after week, alone with himself, Nature and his burro.

Perhaps now, they are somewhere out there in the lone wilderness of the great desert.

On these lone wanderings he couldn't help but study his donkey, or burro as he called it, and his philosophic conclusion was that the ass is the wisest of all animals and the only domesticated one to maintain its own personality. In

much they are alike, the painter and his burro. Even though this old painter had travelled far and wide, visited several continents, seen the art treasures of the world, studied in Paris, known the triumvirate, Cézanne, Gauguin and Van Gogh, also some of the cubists, still he maintained his own personality. They might not be called great—his art or his philosophy—but great was his sincere simplicity. And because he wasn't like the mob, he was a queer fellow, an ass.

But what is man more than a domesticated animal, enthralled between the traces, dragging the cart of civilization, or worse still, but a cog in the wheel of a vast machine? Pray that you may be as free as the ass in the desert and know the wonders of life, and realize that all the marvellous science of today cannot even put back a leaf on the tiniest flower.

"Lawrence could be content with very little, but Sass could be content with less. They both hated civilization, but Lawrence still needed house, fire, cooked food, etc. Sass got along without shelter, living on nuts and water. He didn't even need the camp-fire of the simple prospector."

Some years later I was in Paris, and whom should I meet, on the Rue de Vougirard, towards the Luxembourg Museum, but a man barefoot in sandals, barehead, white hair and beard flowing in the wind—old Sass from Taos. We were both very happy to meet so unexpectedly again. He had just arrived from Africa, where he had been knocking about for some time. I had great admiration for this fine old man. And he was as ready as ever to help one. He also taught me how to stretch my money and get the most out of it and so prolong my stay in Paris.

He was not a lost chicken, but very much at home in the world, whether it be desert or metropolis. I am very fond of old Sass from Taos.

The date was drawing near for the opening of our scheduled exhibition in Santa Fé, and rather than send our pictures by stage coach, we had decided to bring them to the museum ourselves, and stay and do the hanging too. The day before starting off, we went to see Meta Lehmann

for a last counsel. While there, a young fellow, by the name of Knapp, dropped in. He was a Government employee of some kind, if I remember correctly. As we were having tea in the studio, he was asked to join us. The conversation drifted from exhibition to hunting and fishing, and by and by he told us how he could catch fish with his bare hands, and by the sackful too. I thought it was the thickest fish story I had heard yet, and asked him if he was trying to insult our intelligence. Emphatically he insisted on the veracity of his story, corroborated by Meta. They could prove it, too, they said, and wanted to do so the following Sunday, and so we made an appointment.

When Sunday came around, we got Lizzie ready and went to Meta's studio to pick them up.

We were all seated and about to start when Knapp said: "Have you got the gunny-sacks along?"

"Never mind the sacks," said I. "If you can catch one fish with your bare hands, I will be convinced."

But he insisted on at least two sacks, so we got a couple of sacks and went off.

Gótzsche and I still remained doubting Thomases and thought we were in for a joke of some kind, but we didn't mind as it would be a nice drive, some twenty-five miles up to the mountain stream, towards Eagle Nest Lake.

I wrote in my diary:

"After about two hours' drive, we reached our destination. We got out of the car. Knapp threw off his coat and pulled up his sleeves to the very armpit, and placed himself on his belly at the very edge or bank of the stream. At this time of the year the fish were beating their way upstream to lay their eggs. There were lots of fish all right, now and then they would make a jump and skim the surface of the water. But even then it seemed impossible to me to catch a shiny live fish with one's bare hands. I was as doubtful as ever. Knapp, on his belly, was making poking movements with his arm into the water, as if he were trying to grab something. The stream was very muddy and one could not see into it at all. Meta, too, was on her belly, doing as Knapp was. Gótzsche and I just stood there and

laughed and couldn't figure out what they were up to, and I thought: 'You damned fools, how do you expect to catch the fish when you can't even see them? It looks like the joke is on you.'

"But what was that? Knapp threw something out of the water on to the bank. I thought it was a stick or something, but now I saw it wiggle and jump in the sand. I went close to inspect, and I was amazed to find it was a fish of about ten or twelve inches long. Here came another, and now Meta caught one. It was astounding. All I could say was: 'By golly, how do you do it?' and without waiting for an answer, both Gotzsche and I pulled off our coats, rolled up our sleeves and got down on our bellies. As soon as I extended my arm into the water, I felt the fish bumping right into my arm and swimming between my fingers. There must have been hundreds, or rather thousands, of fish. It took some time before we got on to the knack of it, but eventually we caught our first fish, and then, soon after, another. We were catching on now, and soon we stopped counting. There we were, the four of us, on our bellies, throwing fish on the river bank, and before long we had the first sack full. The water was icy cold, so we had to stop for a rest and rub some heat into our arms.

"We strolled upstream a little way, and stopped at a place where some timber had fallen across the stream and made a sort of dam. Here the stream was absolutely thick with fish—thousands of them. They could be shovelled up with two hands, and in a few minutes we had nearly another sackful. There wasn't much fun in that, though, so we went back downstream where it was more of a sport, and caught a few more. But eventually our arms became numb from being immersed in the ice-cold water, so we stopped and were contented with the two sacks of fish. It had been a very exciting experience."

Back in Taos we distributed the fish among the Mexicans and Indians, and for days we had boiled, fried or broiled fish for breakfast, lunch and supper. If the reader is doubtful, as I was, all I can say is, go to Taos in April, hunt up the stream and try for yourself.

In Taos there had been quite some talk about the Bursum Bill, as related by some, to be a scheme to deprive the Indians further of their land and water, and some efforts had been made to block this bill. The Department of Justice was investigating by sending inspectors to Taos to size up the situation. Gossip was running high, and then one day the bomb exploded. Like wildfire, the news spread. Mabel has married Tony—Mabel has married Tony, bla-bla-bla-tat-tat-tat, why did she do that? Everybody wanted to know, but it was none of my business why. And outside of the fact that she did marry Tony, I don't remember a thing about it. Some said she wanted to save the Indians, and it appears that this perhaps was her vain hope, for in a letter, several months later, Lawrence wrote to her from Mexico. He said in part:

"Don't trouble about the Indians. You can't 'save' them; and politics, no matter *what* politics, will only destroy them. I have said many times that you would destroy the Indians. In your lust even for a Saviour's power, you would just destroy them. The same with Collier. He will destroy them. It is his saviour's will to set the claws of his own white egoistic *benevolent* volition into them. Somewhere, the Indians know that you and Collier would, with your salvationist but poisonous white consciousness, destroy them. Remember, Jesus, and The Good, in our sense, in our mystic sense, not just the practical. Jesus, and The Good as you see it, are poison for the Indians. One feels it intensely here in Mexico. Their great saviour Juarez did more to destroy them than all the centuries of Viceroys. Juarez was a pure Indian. This is really a land of Indians; not merely a pueblo.

"I tell you, leave the Indians to their own dark destiny. And leave *yourself* to the same."

Then we had a six-page letter from Ufer, who comments on Mabel's marriage, and perhaps that expresses, if not all, at least one man's opinion. Unfortunately, or fortunately, it is so *awfully* frank that its publication is prohibitive, but I will quote it in part.

"1258 NORTH STATE STREET,
CHICAGO, ILL.,

April 22, 1923.

MY DEAR KNUD MERRILD AND MY DEAR KAI GÓTZSCHE—
Your very fine letter received late last night, and I am sure
that you will get this before leaving Taos on the 27th. . . .

I hope you will write me continually as I want to know
about you and what you both are doing.

It is bad news that you have not sold any in Santa Fé,
but that town never did sell any. At least you have
exhibited there, and which may help you in other towns.
I am sure that the artists in Santa Fé will not let a dollar
escape them, for I know they are all hard after the money
in order to pull through themselves. . . .

That you got two sackfuls of trout¹ surprises me, and
at this time of the year. . . . I would like to know the
place and please write me about it. . . .

Trusting that both of you will do well, and that I
hear from you.—I am, sincerely yours,

WALTER UFER."

Then about this same time we had a note from Lawrence,
the last we received while in Taos.

"ORIZABA,

April 21.

TO KNUD MERRILD.

I've had about enough of this country and continent.
Think we shall sail at the end of this month to New York
and, at the end of May, sail for Europe. That's what I
intend to do. I've had enough of this.—We go back to
Mexico City tomorrow, and I shall find mail.

D. H. L."

When I had read this, I said to Gótzsche:

"I doubt if that 'new life' idea of his will ever materialize.
How can a man be a leader when he doesn't even give the
thing half a chance, or changes his mind almost overnight?"

"Who knows?" was his reply.

"Well, he hasn't even been a full month in Mexico and
he has already had enough, and is ready to leave for Europe."

¹ It was not trout, some other kind of fish.

"That's what he intends to do at the moment," said Gótzsche; "he might change his mind again."

"Quite," said I, "and change his mind once more and maybe go." And I recalled that one day he would say:

"The horrible human mistakes of Europe. There it is, laid all over the world, the heavy established European way of life. Like their huge ponderous cathedrals and factories and cities, enormous encumbrances of stone and steel and brick, weighing on the surface of the earth.

"But, suddenly, the mass of it made him sick, and the beauty was nauseous to him.

"He had now a horror of vast super-incumbent buildings. They were a nightmare. Even the cathedrals. Huge, huge bulks that are called beauty. Beauty seemed to him like some turgid tumor. Never again, he felt, did he want to look at London, the horrible *weight* of it: or at Rome with all the pressure on the hills. Horrible, inert, man-moulded weight. Heavy as death. The horrible human mistakes of Europe. And the even worse human mistakes of America.'

And next:

"He longed for Europe with hungry longing: Florence, with Giotto's pale tower: or the Pincio at Rome: or the woods in Berkshire—heavens, the English spring with primroses under the bare hazel bushes, and thatched cottages among plum blossoms. He felt he would give anything on earth to be in England. Or the tall corn under the olives in Sicily. Or London Bridge, with all the traffic on the river. Or Bavaria with gentian and yellow globe flowers, and the Alps still icy. Oh God, to be in Europe, lovely, lovely Europe that he had hated so thoroughly and abused so vehemently, saying it was moribund and stale and finished. The fool was himself. He had got out of temper, and so had called Europe moribund: assuming that he himself, of course, was not moribund: but sprightly and chirpy and too vital, as the Americans would say, for Europe. Well, if a man wants to make a fool of himself, it is as well to let him."

Well, whatever Lawrence might think or say or decide to do, we were ready now to leave Taos.

My diary says:

"As our exhibition was to be taken down at Santa Fé Museum, Saturday, April 28th, we had decided to leave on the 27th, and on that date our friends came to say goodbye, and to warn us, and try to persuade us not to go, as the roads were too hazardous, and the April weather too capricious. There was still lots of snow in the mountain passes to get stuck in, and in thawing weather the danger of avalanches was too great. On low lands, where snow had melted, the mud roads were so soft that cars sank in to the hub caps. Travellers who had barely made their way to Taos made these reports, they said. We contended that these travellers had proved it could be done, and so could we. A little difficulty couldn't scare a couple of modern Vikings. On the contrary, it was tempting to get out and conquer the difficulties. And so we said goodbye and rattled off.

"We left Taos a little before noon, despite a lively snow-storm. It was not without lament that we left, for we had spent a part of our life here that we should never forget, and we had learned to like Taos, many of its people and its surroundings. But then the unknown has a mysterious power, and soon we were happily looking forward to new experiences.

"We stayed a couple of days in Santa Fé and a party was given for us by the young artists group, 'Los Cinco Pintores.'

"On Sunday, we opened a new exhibition of our decorative work at a local gallery and entertained guests and friends at tea.

"Then we left Santa Fé, and New Mexico, the country we had come to like so much, the country we had found so overwhelmingly beautiful from the first moment we had seen it. We talked of Lawrence and pitied him that he could not see it, but only called it a landscape of the moon and repeatedly said it is so hopelessly dead. However, I am very happy to discover that he later realized its grandeur, and wrote so beautifully about it. And what could be more

fitting as a farewell ode to New Mexico than to quote Lawrence?"

He wrote:

"I think New Mexico was the greatest experience from the outside world that I have ever had. It certainly changed me forever. Curious as it may sound, it was New Mexico that liberated me from the present era of civilization, the great era of material and mechanical development. Months spent in Holy Kandy, in Ceylon, the holy of holies of southern Buddhism, had not touched the great psyche of materialism and idealism which dominated me. And years, even in the exquisite beauty of Sicily, right among the old Greek paganism that still lives there, had not shattered the essential Christianity on which my character was established. Australia was a sort of dream or trance, like being under a spell, the self remaining unchanged, so long as the trance did not last too long. Tahiti, in a mere glimpse, repelled me: and so did California, after a stay of a few weeks. There seemed a strange brutality in the spirit of the western coast, and I felt: O, let me get away!

"But the moment I saw the brilliant proud morning shine high up over the deserts of Santa Fé, something stood still in my soul, and I started to attend. There was a certain magnificence in the high-up day, a certain eagle-like royalty, so different from the equally pure, equally pristine and lovely morning of Australia, which is so soft, so utterly pure in its softness, and betrayed by green parrot-flying. But in the lovely morning of Australia one went into a dream. In the magnificent fierce morning of New Mexico one sprang awake, a new part of the soul woke up suddenly, and the old world gave way to a new.

"There are all kinds of beauty in the world, thank God, though ugliness is homogeneous. How lovely is Sicily, with Calabria across the sea like an opal, and Etna with her snow in a world above and beyond! How lovely is Tuscany, with little red tulips wild among the corn: or bluebells at dusk in England, or mimosa in clouds of pure yellow among the grey-green dim foliage of Australia, under a soft, blue, unbreathed sky! But for a *greatness* of

beauty I have never experienced anything like New Mexico. All those mornings when I went with a hoe along the ditch to the Cañon, at the ranch, and stood, in the fierce, proud silence of the Rockies, on their foothills, to look far over the desert to the blue mountains away in Arizona, blue as chalcedony, with the sagebrush desert sweeping grey-blue in between, dotted with tiny cube-crystals of houses, the vast amphitheatre of lofty, indomitable desert, sweeping round to the ponderous Sangre de Cristo, mountains on the east, and coming up flush at the pine-dotted foothills of the Rockies! What splendour! Only the tawny eagle could really sail out into the splendour of it all. Leo Stein once wrote to me: 'It is the most aesthetically-satisfying landscape I know.' To me it was much more than that. It had a splendid silent terror, and a vast far-and-wide magnificence which made it way beyond mere aesthetic appreciation. Never is the light more pure and overweening than there, arching with a royalty almost cruel over the hollow, up-tilted world. For it is curious that the land which has produced modern political democracy at its highest pitch should give one the greatest sense of overweening, terrible proudness and mercilessness: but so beautiful, God! so beautiful! Those that have spent morning after morning alone there, pitched among the pines above the great proud world of desert, will know, almost unbearably, how beautiful it is, how clear and unquestioned is the might of the day. Just day itself is tremendous there. It is so easy to understand that the Aztecs gave hearts of men to the sun. For the sun is not merely hot or scorching, not at all. It is of a brilliant and unchallengeable purity and haughty serenity which would make one sacrifice the heart to it. Ah, yes, in New Mexico the heart is sacrificed to the sun and the human being is left stark, heartless, undauntedly religious."

From Santa Fé we went south over Albuquerque to Los Lunas, where we turned west.

Old Sass, who was thoroughly acquainted with the Southwest, had mapped the route for us, and he saw to it that we visited the most important Indian tribes, and viewed the greatest sights of Nature.

He had also told us not to sleep on our cots as it would be too cold at this time of year, but to sleep Indian-fashion on the bare ground, in our tent, and preferably to camp in timberland at night, so we could chop off small branches from coniferous trees, to use as a mattress.

We encountered many hazards on our way, too numerous to mention, as we did not always follow the main roads, but made excursions or short-cuts across desert and prairie and over mountain passes, where roads were absent—but sometimes a little-used trail could be better than a much-traversed road. The main roads were in reality not much more than trails anyhow. In those days, there were indeed very few of the splendid highways of today. There were times where we didn't even make a hundred miles per day and, looking at random on my map, I see that on May 8th we made one hundred and forty-three miles, and the following day, one hundred and fifty-seven miles.

I wrote, at the time, twenty articles about our trip across the continent, for a Danish newspaper in my home town. I would like to include them here, but am afraid it would be too detailed, so I will just touch upon the high lights.

We came closest to a hold-up when we camped at a small desert town, where some campers were held up in their tents in the middle of the night. However, we knew nothing about it until afterwards. It was not pleasant to know that some made it a practice to hold up campers. But we avoided public camping-grounds in towns or near towns and preferred a secluded spot out in the wilderness of Nature.

Somewhere on our trip we were travelling in a sandy desert, following the two tracks which the wheels of other cars had made, when we came upon an approaching automobile. The driver of the other car did not slow down and was speeding right towards us. It looked like a head-on collision, and so, at the last second Gótzsche jerked our car out of the tracks, and we sideswiped and zigzagged some fifteen or twenty feet into the loose sand off the road and stalled the motor. The other car sped by, and we cursed him plenty. We started our car to resume our travels, but the wheels sped deeper and deeper into the sand. There

was no vegetation to put under the wheels for traction. We tried to dig our way out, but the sand was too loose. We were stuck. Few cars came our way, and they sped hastily by with no intention of giving aid. Our situation looked hopeless.

But after being marooned for a couple of hours, a jovial fellow stopped, got out a long rope and pulled us back into the tracks. "Never yield more than one track," he advised us. "Don't let yourself be bluffed by road bandits."

Tenaciously we followed his advice. A good percentage of the cars we met tried to bluff and yielded only at the last instant. One fellow had so much speed on towards us that we thought we had better be safe, so we stopped as soon as we had yielded the one track. He had to jam on his brakes and he skidded to within a few feet of us. He got out of his car and ordered us to get off the road, as he had the right of way, travelling east. What a silly lie. We, too, got out of our car, and we also told *him* a few things. But he was a mean fellow. That we were two didn't seem to faze him either; he was the kind one could expect anything from. So I opened my coat still wider to make sure that he would see the gun in my belt. He did. He got into his car, backed up and made a couple of attempts to get started without result, and told us he couldn't get out of the track. Then we both went up to his car and, in no uncertain terms, told him to quit his monkey-business and get out, and the sooner the better for him. He got out all right, stalled his car—and did he curse!

At Grant, New Mexico, we had decided to break off from the main road and make a short-cut to Zuni Indian Pueblo, using a trail over the desert and crossing the Oso Ridge of the Zuni Mountains, so we stopped to fill up with oil and gas before starting out for the unknown.

Some fifteen miles out in the lonesome desert, the car developed a knock, and as we didn't know what it was, we just went on. Soon the car stopped. As the radiator had been boiling, we thought the car was just overheated because of the hot desert weather. But after letting it cool

off, we couldn't even turn the crank. Then I crawled under the car to inspect. The whole chassis was dripping with oil. I discovered that the pet-cock to the crank-case was wide open, either forgotten or left so on purpose by the gas-station attendant. The bearings were burnt out, and we were stuck for good.

We sat down and waited for someone to come by that could tow us back to town. But in this God-forsaken, desolate country nobody appeared. We came to the conclusion that it might take days, or even weeks, before someone would pass on this lonesome trail. Something had to be done; we had no provisions and only a little water. We decided that one of us should walk back to town, buy food and bring back a mechanic to repair the car; the other should stay with Lizzie to watch our belongings.

And so, as so often before, we got out a coin and while we discussed the rules for flipping, I scrutinized the small coin. On one side was the eagle, flying under the words, "The United States of America," and on the other, the head of Liberty, topped by, "In God We Trust." So it was agreed that the eagle would be walking, and the head would remain waiting and trust in God. High up in the air I twirled the coin.

"Head," said Gótzsche, and head it was, and off I went. I don't know which was less desirable—walking or waiting. When I came back, Gótzsche said he wished he had said "tail." To wait in the lone desert in uncertainty was no picnic. Well, I know it was no fun walking in the heavy loose sand, under the burning hot midday sun.

I had walked perhaps half the distance when other trails joined mine, and as I rounded the point of a foothill I came upon three men: two cowboys on their horses, and a man in a car with the top down. I was very happy and hastened to join the group. My happiness was short-lived, however, for as I came up to them I found they were very hard to talk to, restless and suspicious, and barely answering my questions.

"You are not a revenuer, or prohibition agent, are you?" asked the man in the car.

I eagerly denied it.

"If so, we would just have to shoot another one of those spy-rats!" said one of the cowboys, fingering his six-shooter.

"Aw, go on," said the other cowboy, "a revenuer ain't worth a bullet." And he patted the lasso on his saddle-horn. "A rope is plenty good enough for them guys!"

"What the hell," said the man in the car. "Let's have another drink." And he hauled out a small cask of booze from under a piece of canvas in the seat of his car. Apparently he was the boss of the cowboys. And in commanding tones he offered me a drink, or rather it was forced upon me. I thought it best not to refuse, although I had never attempted to drink out of a barrel before, but I tried to do what they had just done. I lifted the rather heavy anker above my head, and then tilted it to drink out of the bung-hole. But I was not very successful, and some of the liquor escaped and dribbled down my chin, to the disgust of one of the men, who hollered:

"Look out, you damned greenhorn, you are spilling all the booze."

I lowered the anker, wiped my chin with the back of my hand and brushed my clothes. Boisterously, the others laughed. They were as bold as brass and beginning to get drunk. The lot reminded me of the outlaws you see in the movies—the bad men of the wild South-west. Any minute I expected them to start shooting around my feet, to make me dance for them. Their insolent presumptions were getting pretty daring.

We had several more drinks, and I took great care not to spill any of it again. I simply plugged up the bung-hole with my mouth and pretended to drink. I wanted no more of this deadly moonshine. They thought the greenhorn was getting on too well now, and so I was bawled out for drinking too much.

"You greedy bastard! Leave some for the other guys, too!"

They were getting thoroughly drunk, and the party seemed to me to be everlasting. But, suddenly, the boss gave some orders to the cowboys, and commanded me to

get into the car with him. And with the drunk boss at the wheel, I had the wildest race across the desert that I have ever had, but, luckily, although my heart was in my throat, we arrived safely at Grant.

I went to the garage where we had bought oil and gas and asked the proprietor to get his car and tools ready so he could fix my car in the desert; I also told him to take some oil along. I would, in the meantime, go to a store for provisions.

It was well into the middle of the afternoon when we arrived at the broken-down car and Gótzsche. When the car was repaired and started, it was almost dark. The mechanic asked twenty dollars for his work.

First I told him that it was his attendant's fault—for whom he was responsible—and therefore I felt he was not entitled to any fee, but that he ought to pay *us* twenty dollars for all the grief and inconvenience he had caused us. He protested loudly and boldly—we, a couple of greenhorns, to tell him—no—twenty dollars we would have to pay—or else!

But then, Gótzsche and I closed in on him and very harshly gave him a good piece of our mind. Perhaps, too, he remembered my revolver which I, in good movie style, had played with, spinning it on my index finger and such-like, while he worked on the car.

Whatever his reason, the fellow became very meek and humble, perhaps realizing that here in the lone wilderness he was up against the law of the stronger and it was no use to try to buck the law of the club. He said we could pay him nothing or whatever we thought right. We were determined to pay him nothing, not a penny. We were sufficiently angry for all the trouble he had caused and told him he could consider himself lucky that we didn't give him a beating to boot.

Even though we were greenhorns, we were not to be taken advantage of, understand! "And now you get the hell out of here, before we lose our tempers!"

He was getting quite frightened and, hurriedly, he gathered up his tools and got into his tow-car.

Meanwhile, Gótzsche and I went into a conference in Danish. Our roles as tough hombres didn't fit us quite well, and we softened and decided to pay him half. As he was getting ready to step into his car and drive off, I hollered:

"Hey, you! Come back here!" He hurried back to us, and I said, "We think you did a good job, so we will make it a fifty-fifty proposition. What do you think of ten bucks? Will that do?"

"That sure would be fine," he said, and he was very grateful when Gótzsche paid him off, and admonished him never again to try to take advantage of greenhorns.

It was getting dark when we went off in opposite directions. We ought to have made camp, but thought we had had enough of that deadly spot in the desert, so we drove on into the darkness.

Upon reflection over the incident, we concluded that maybe the climax had not yet been reached. Who knows, maybe the fellow was brooding and getting plenty sore and plotting revenge. Perhaps he would send the sheriff after us. Well, that wouldn't be so bad; we felt we were in the right. But worse, he might gather together some of the bad boys around the place and come out in the middle of the night and beat us up, or do us even worse harm.

So we continued on in the dark until we reached the Oso Ridge, then we turned off the trail and into timber forest. But before going too far we destroyed our tracks in the ground. Then we went on zigzagging our way among the trees till we were far enough away from the trail to be discovered, and found a place where we felt we were securely hidden in the dense part of the forest.

The moon was coming up, aiding us in pitching camp. We cleared the ground of dead leaves and branches, made a fire and prepared and ate a late supper. Then we sat around and smoked our pipes till the last embers died out, listening to all the strange sounds of the night. The prairie wolves were abundant, howling and yelping all around us, but we didn't mind. A night like this, in a moonlit mountain forest, somewhere in the great wild South-west, is so

wonderful that I will abstain from description and leave it to your imagination, as the publicity departments of our day and age have exhausted their vocabularies.

We shovelled some sand on to the dying fire, buried it, and went to rest.

We woke up in the middle of the night, aware of an explosive sound, or a sound like that of a shot. We listened intently, heard nothing unusual, and realized that a dry branch or cone of the spruce had dropped on the drum-like roof of our tent. Coyotes were sniffing at our door outside. Through the mosquito netting I saw the green silvery moon, hanging peacefully above a myriad of soft dark silhouettes, bathed in a light of phosphoric moonbeams, and a soft wind played hide-and-seek in millions of acicular leaves, whispering in a faint rustle. On the wings of magic I was carried to oblivion.

The next day we visited El Morro National Monument on our way to Zuni. Then from Zuni we went over Gallup into Arizona, where we visited Navajo and Apache country, saw the painted desert, the petrified forest and, not to forget the greatest sight of all, the Grand Canyon.

I wrote in my diary:

"Grand Canyon: This immense cleft in the belly of the earth, one of the mightiest sights of the world. Mystic and unfathomable, when filled with slowly moving clouds, or light mist hanging around its fairy-tale formations like white or violet veils. A sunset over the Canyon is so fantastic that the poet lacks words, the painter colour, and modern technique and chemistry must give up in the attempt to describe this gigantic and marvellous wonder of the world.

"Nailed to the spot, overwhelmed with speechless astonishment, I find myself day-dreaming, face to face with Nature's masterpiece, thinking: genius of man yet lacks the ability to express his feelings for it. The richest talents become helpless, and all our knowing fades to nothing when we confront the creative forces of Nature."

We stayed at the Canyon for some days before we resumed our travelling towards the Pacific Coast.

Noteworthy to us was the arrival at Needles, California, on the edge of the Mohave Desert. It was rather hot, 117 in the shade. Owing to the intense heat that prevails during the summer months, few travellers cross the desert in the daytime, but stay over to make the run across the desert at night. We decided, however, to take a try at it and go on, but we had only made a few miles before we agreed that the heat was almost unbearable, and, shortly, when we came upon a small oasis of palm trees, we found that several travellers had already pitched camp. We decided to do the same, even though it was only early afternoon. At about seven o'clock we threw ourselves on our cots, stark naked, to try to catch some sleep before the trip, but the heat was unbearable and we didn't sleep a wink.

An hour or so after midnight the moon would be up, and that was the time most of the travellers had set for departure. About midnight the camp became lively, as most of the people began breaking camp. We, too, got ready and started into the dark desert night.

I thought it was a fine way to start my twenty-ninth birthday, and the sight and experience a swell present.

At the end of the day we pitched camp for the last time en route. We had been in California a day and a half and had not yet seen anything but desert, so I looked in the Blue Book to see what the next day would bring. I quote:

"Barstow to San Bernadino, Cal.—81.7 mi. Via Victorville, gravel and sand road to summit of Cajon Pass, balance macadam and concrete. After crossing the western edge of the Mohave Desert and reaching the summit of Cajon Pass, the tourist is suddenly confronted with a magnificent panorama of incomparable grandeur. Descending on easy winding grades over splendid roadways with high mountains towering on all sides, the tourist almost abruptly finds himself within the semi-tropical vegetation of Southern California. Orange and lemon groves line the highway, while flowers and palm trees have taken the place of sage and cactus. Good stopping and supply stations will be found at Victorville.

"San Bernadino to Los Angeles, Cal. 63.3 mi. Via Foothill Blvd. and Pasadena. Paved roads all the way.

"This route presents a spectacle of unsurpassed beauty. Following closely along the base of a gigantic mountain range, the road passes through miles of orange, lemon and olive groves, and palms and flowers are in abundance along the highway.

"This is a section of the National Old Trails Road (red, white and blue marker)."

CALIFORNIA

WE arrived in Los Angeles, on North Broadway, and as we saw a camping ground, we stopped and made our last camp. It was five o'clock, Friday afternoon, May 11th, 1923, and, according to our speedometer, we had then travelled 5726 miles in our faithful Lizzie, since we left New York on Friday morning, September 1st, 1922.

Our friends in New York had warned us against the trip, and had furthermore predicted that we would never make it, because they did not think the car good enough, nor us good enough drivers. Gótzsche had had about three or four lessons in all, and in turn he had given me one lesson before we started. (A driver's licence was not compulsory in New York.) I must admit that we knew next to nothing about a motor, but we did have the utmost confidence in ourselves, and we just took it as a matter of course that we had now arrived, safe and sound, in Los Angeles. We got a stack of postal cards and wrote to our friends, here and abroad, about it, just for the record.

We took a street car to the Plaza, and landed in the heart of Old Los Angeles in the Mexican quarter, took a walk in the vicinity and found ourselves in Chinatown. Around the Plaza there were many Mexicans, Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos and Negroes—a very cosmopolitan town, we thought. We stopped at a Mexican restaurant to have supper, and as Gótzsche always liked to try something new, we had a dish of chili con carne.

The next morning we broke camp, rolled up our tent and rented a room each in the Adams district, one block off Figueroa, and were settled. Then we went to the post-office to get our mail, which had accumulated at General Delivery while we were en route.

There were three letters from Lawrence and Frieda, forwarded from Taos.

"HOTEL MONTE CARLO,
AV. URUGUAY 69,
MEXICO CITY,
21 April.

To KNUD MERRILD.

DEAR GÖTZSCHE AND MERRILD—I found your letter here—you may have left Taos already—Mrs. Freeman wrote and said she thought you only wanted her letter in *May*, but that she was writing you at once.—If you haven't had her letter, write to her. Mrs. Elizabeth Freeman, *Palm Springs*, California.

I give you a note to a man in Los Angeles. Go to him if you want help.

I'm *still* going to look for a place here. Going to see a Dane who has a farm, tomorrow—Send your address to this hotel the moment you have a place. If ever you get really hard up, let me know at once: both of you.—There is a quick railway down from Los Angeles to Guadalajara, where I think we may settle.—It's not so easy here. In these states almost *every* hacienda (farm) is smashed, and you can't live even one mile outside the village or town: you will probably be robbed or murdered by roving bandits and scoundrels who still call themselves revolutionaries.—But I'll try the state of Jalisco.—Yours,

D. H. LAWRENCE."

Out of sight, out of mind, is an old saying, but not with Lawrence. He might be of many moods—changeable and even irrational—but in his friendship with us he was very stable. It touched us deeply when we read: "If ever you get really hard up, let me know at once—both of you." We felt deeply grateful to him. We felt so secure in having Lawrence behind us, in thought and in willingness to help—like a real good big brother. This is the real Lawrence. We swore that we would do our utmost never to permit our friendship with Lawrence to become a burden to him.



Frieda Lawrence at Atlixcomex, 1923

Then we opened the next letter. It was our first from Frieda.

“MONTE CARLO,
MEXICO,
Friday.”

TO KNUD MERRILD.

DEAR FRIENDS—Today you leave Taos and you won't be sorry—We haven't found anything to *live* yet here, but tonight Lawrence goes to Guadalajara, there is a lake near there and a pretty place and you can swim—there would be much to paint here—only these terrible revolutions have made it so miserable—all these broken places—But we *do* like it—If Lawrence can't get a house at this place and doesn't like it, we go to New York and Europe—But I am glad we came anyhow—the photographs are awfully nice. I love that one of Lawrence and Pips and me—Do keep the plate. Bynner was sorry not to be in Santa Fé to look after you—they are both nice—Bynner and Johnson—Lawrence's 'Captain's Doll' is a great success in England—And Mabel really married to Tony? And our Pips now—and I remember when Mabel offered him to . . . he wouldn't have her—In a Hearst magazine I saw Ufer's picture with Mrs. Berry's name—I hope you will have a good trip and that Lizzie will behave—Our Fontana Vecchia has been done up and we can have it—Perhaps we shall go back—Europe seems more miserable than ever—We saw a terrible bull fight and ran away after ten minutes—We shall think of you on the road.

Guadalajara would be near from Los Angeles! So all good luck.

FRIEDA LAWRENCE.”

Then Lawrence continues the letter:

“I address to Merrild because I think his name is easier for the post people. Hope you got my letter and enclosure to W. L. Comfort—also the letter from Mrs. Freeman. I am tired of looking around here—this week-end will be the last effort. What's the good if one can't live safely in the country? D. H. L.”

We opened the third letter; it was registered, and from Lawrence.

“ZARAGOZA No. 4,
Chapala (JALISCO),
MEX., May 3, 1923.

TO KNUD MERRILD.

DEAR GÓTZSCHE AND MERRILD—F. brought your letter from Mexico yesterday: so sorry about Merrild's gum boil: hope he's well. That beastly Taos.

Here we are, in our own house—a long house with no upstairs—shut in by trees on two sides.—We live on a wide verandah, flowers round—it is fairly hot—I spend the day in trousers and shirt, barefoot—have a Mexican woman, Isabel, to look after us—very nice. Just outside the gate the big Lake of Chapala—40 miles long, 20 miles wide. We can't see the lake, because the trees shut us in. But we walk out in a wrap to bathe.—There are Camions—Ford omnibuses—to Guadalajara—2 hours. Chapala village is small with a market place with trees and Indians in big hats. Also three hotels, because this is a tiny holiday place for Guadalajara. I hope you'll get down, I'm sure you'd like painting here.—It may be that even yet I'll have my little hacienda and grow bananas and oranges.

Seltzer said he never received the two book-jackets, *Mastro-Don* and *Birds Beasts*. I say he *must* have had them. He *must look*. I'm afraid he is muddled in his office. Write to him, and if he doesn't find them, you can make another copy. Meanwhile I enclose fifty dollars for them on account. If you need the money quickly, go to Will Levington Comfort, 4993 Pasadena Avenue, Los Angeles, and get him to guarantee it at a bank. I sent you a letter to him to Taos. If you haven't got it, take him this.

Heavens, Mabel *married*.—Merrild, please write me the most interesting points of the gossip concerning the event.

I did have a right bad cold in Puebla, but was better in a few days. Only then, I wanted to go back quickly to Europe. When I feel sick I want to go back. When I feel well I want to stay.

Trust this gets you safely. The money of course is for both.—You'll see how Pips doesn't belong at all in Mexico. Only in Taos. Write at once. D. H. LAWRENCE.”

I will elucidate a little on the last letter. It seemed that whenever I was to leave a place I would have a gumboil. I had another just before starting on our trip. That's the one Lawrence refers to.

About the book jackets: Gótzsche had made the cover for "Mastro-Don," I the one for "Birds Beasts." Seltzer was not keen on taking them, despite Lawrence's wishes. Lawrence knew it, but he wanted them used. The books were to have jackets and he much preferred ours to the ordinary commercial, conventional ones. But the real thing is that Lawrence was so concerned about us that he feared that perhaps, in a large city where we were absolute strangers with little or no money and without work, we would be starving rather than ask for help. And so, very diplomatically, *he* paid us on account for the jackets, rather than wait for Seltzer to do it.

We were not at all sure that Seltzer would use our designs, and we were touched to the innermost fibres of our hearts that Lawrence should be so concerned about us. He had again proved himself a true friend. That man was great in whatever he did! How could we ever hope to pay him back?

"We can't take the money," we repeated to each other. "We can't, we don't deserve it."

But as we faced reality, it was tempting. We would soon be entirely without funds. We decided to wait before cashing the cheque to see if we couldn't find some work. If not, we contended, there is pleasure in giving as well as in receiving. And who knows, perhaps Seltzer yet would use our designs.

The next day was Sunday, and as we were eager to add the "postscript" to our trip, so to speak—Los Angeles, Long Beach—and conclude our journey from the Atlantic to the Pacific Coast, we started out. We were also longing to see water again and breathe the salt air.

We were not impressed by Long Beach, but it was exciting to think that down there somewhere lay the South Sea Islands, Australia, and up there beyond, Japan, China and the Far East.

Sitting on the beach, I finished my last article and wrote these concluding lines : "How wonderful to breathe again the salt air of the Sea, to look into the vast expanse of the Ocean. Slowly the great waves come rolling towards Land, culminating in powerful breakers, roaring in a mighty thrust towards us, disintegrating in a spray of foam, telling of new worlds and new adventures."

Then came Monday, and we went out to look for work. We had a few letters of introduction. Among them one from Emil Opffer, editor of a Danish newspaper in New York. Or rather, he just wrote the name down and said, "You just tell 'em I sent you, that's enough."

We had had a long list of names from him in our notebooks and had seen a lot of people on our way, and the mere mention of his name had been sufficient; we were always well received. That man knew people in all the corners of the earth. And he saw to it that we were known before we arrived in the different cities and states. He wrote about us in his paper almost every week, and if he had nothing to write about or had any letters from us, telling about our trip across the continent, he used our names in his column of anecdotes. For instance :

"Artist painters in New Mexico.

MERRILD: There were burglars in our cabin last night!

GOTZSCHE: What did they do?

MERRILD: They ransacked the cabin and then they gave me a dollar."

It might not be so very funny, but few of them were, so it is a fair example. It served its purpose, however; people knew us before we arrived.

Besides his work as an editor, Opffer was renowned for his daring and fearlessness. Once he jumped overboard from a liner in high sea, just to see if the life-saving equipment was in order. He was promptly rescued. He lived in exile in America as a consequence for insults to the Royal House, and also the Minister of Justice, through his paper. He was a crusader against snobbery and a gallant fighter for the underdog. All in all, he was a jolly good fellow, a likeable chap.

This time we went to see a Danish painter who held a minor position at Universal Studios. He was at the time leading the work of decorating the sets for the "Hunchback of Nôtre Dame," and kindly offered to put us on for a few days to help finish it. But we would have to get reinstated in the Union, as we had dropped our cards when we left New York, for we hoped not to work as decorators again. The initiation fee was larger than we could afford at the moment, so we declined with thanks.

He gave us names of persons in other studios, who again gave us other names, and so the ball started rolling. We became very busy seeing people. Someone had even arranged to get us invited to meet a "coming up" star one evening in her home. She was young, and beautiful beyond words, and as dumb.

Believe it or not, she had read "Women in Love," and as her chatter revealed, she was very overbearing. She had just skimmed the surface of the book. There were three or four other men present at the party who did nothing but repeat how beautiful she was, how great an actress she was, and that the picture at present in making would place her in top rank among the stars. "Gee, you are great, honey!" And how she revelled in being slapped on her back.

She was as nice to us, however, as others had been and gave us new names to go to, and so the ball kept on rolling. We could have had many jobs by that time, but we didn't want them. We wanted to live as artists. Our greatest struggle was to keep clear of our trade. An artist friend of mine has often said: "I am not at all thankful to my parents for letting me learn the trade as a painter and decorator—to have something to fall back on! I damn my trade, it is so damnable easy to fall back on, and each time you fall back, it holds you longer, and as you grow older, it is harder to struggle so you are finally buried as an artist and can live the rest of your life with your broken dreams, as a house-painter."

I do not share his view entirely. But if one is not a successful artist in the first years after one's training and

debut, it becomes a fierce struggle between the trade and the art. And we knew it! But we wanted creative work as designers of costumes, interiors or stage sets, but no jobs were open. Most of the studios liked our work and we were advised to leave samples of our work in their files, but we didn't trust this procedure.

We hunted all that week and the next, and then we had this postcard from Lawrence:

“CHAPALA,
May 17.

To KNUD MERRILD.

Had your post card—glad you arrived safely, anyhow, and wait to hear about the trip. Go to Will L. Comfort for any advice—4993 Pasadena Ave. I told him you were coming. Nothing new from N. York. It's getting hot here. Did you hear from Taos that John Dunn's house and garage burnt down.—And how could Tony marry again, could he get a divorce from the Indian wife?—Do you hate Lizzie finally, or not yet? D. H. L.”

We had not yet called on Will L. Comfort, but as we were beginning to need the money, room rent being due, we had to get in touch with him so we could get our cheque cashed. We called on Mr. Comfort, but he was not in, and a few days later we had this letter from him.

“May 25, 1923,
4993 PASADENA AVENUE,
LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

To KNUD MERRILD.

MY DEAR FRIENDS—I hope all is well with you. My mother said you tried to get me the other afternoon—house phone—Garvanza 3566—best time at noon or 6 p.m.

I have been hitting it high and hard, but expect to make a list of a few people for you to see very soon, unless you've caught on. I'm sorry that these intervening days have fled. A book pulls me in so deep that I sometimes do not hear noises.

Call or write.—Warmly yours,

WILL LEVINGTON COMFORT.”

We phoned him for an appointment and went to see him. We introduced ourselves as the friends of Lawrence. He greeted us thus: "I see, I see . . . how very interesting," and his eyes took us all in. "So you are the two homosexual lovers that stayed with him in the mountains all winter, do tell me about it."

His outspoken frankness struck us so funny that we couldn't help laughing. We assured him that neither of us—nor Lawrence—were homosexuals, and that Lawrence lived a happy, married life with his wife, Frieda.

It seemed to be a very disappointing blow to him. "Are you sure?" he said. "I have always thought of Lawrence as homosexual. You needn't hide anything from me, you know."

"That we are perfectly normal might not be very interesting to you, but it is the truth."

Then he tried to nose in on Lawrence's private relations with his wife. We answered him very curtly—he might as well know he had come to the wrong party. We suggested that he write to Lawrence about it—he would be better able to answer those questions.

His interest cooled. He was sorry his time was so limited. We got down to business and he wrote a letter of introduction to a banker, and in it he enclosed a letter from Lawrence. As we left, he asked us to come again, but we never did.

We went to the bank to cash our cheque. "But wait," said the banker, "there is another cheque for you in this letter."

We protested and said it was a mistake, and asked him to return it.

"It is not a mistake," he answered. "I will read you some of what the letter says." It was to this effect:

"They will probably refuse it, but you must urge them to take it, as they do need it very much. It is on account for work that I shall shortly commission them to do."

So what else could we do but accept and be happy for the work in prospect? I am utterly lacking words to describe the overflow of good feelings we had for Lawrence, and we didn't forget Frieda either. We knew she was wholly

in accord with Lawrence, perhaps she was even responsible for the second cheque. The little income they had from Lawrence's books wasn't much, but they had enough to spare to help others, both their relatives and friends. A larger generosity I have never met. Lawrence not only preached that he didn't want to possess and did not care for money, but practised it as well.

Now we could pay our rent and go on hunting jobs again. But we were not very successful and our money was soon low again, so Gótzsche succumbed and took a job at M.G.M. studio as a decorator. I kept on a little longer, and was finally awarded a job at the local world exposition. "The architect for THE MONROE DOCTRINE CENTENNIAL AND MOTION PICTURE INDUSTRIAL EXPOSITION commissioned me to design the ornamental decorations for all the exposition buildings. I was to have a free hand in my creative efforts, but found that I was pretty well tied down.

- The job interested me, nevertheless. I had a gang of some twenty to thirty decorators to carry out my designs. Gótzsche, too, was interested in his job. Not the work, however, but the experience, the task of making a movie, the life back-stage, etc. He was quickly elevated to the position as straw-boss, which amused him—a much envied position, he ironically told me. One thing he hated was to be on roll-call, to be called up at night to go to work, and after working a couple of weeks, he said, "I will be damned if I want to be their slave. I will work during the regular day hours, no more night work for me. They can fire me if they like." They didn't fire him!

We were beginning to feel pretty good, and we wrote Lawrence about it all, to which the following letter pertains:

"ZARAGOZA #4, CHAPALA,
JALISCO, MEXICO,
June 4, 1923.

TO KNUD MERRILD.

DEAR MERRILD—We were much entertained by your letter, & glad to find you in such good spirits. Now today comes a letter from Gótzsche, who says you have

got a good job and that you are happy—So perhaps Los Angeles will be your lucky city after all.

I sent you a copy of *The Captain's Doll*, addressed to Gotzsche. I hope you got it. The cover looks very gay and lively, I think.

I am busy doing a novel: hope it will continue to go well.—Mexico is still much more fun than U.S.A.—much wilder. We have a man to sleep on the verandah with a pistol: and we may not walk outside the village for fear of being robbed or carried off by bandits. And this little village has twenty soldiers to guard it which is all very stupid. We've got a whole stack of servants and semi-servants living at the end of the house: not because we want them, but because they seem to have their holes there, like rabbits—Isabel, Carmen, Maria, Daniele, Pedra and Francisco. Now they're bargaining for eggs—like the devil—at 6 centavos—and we only pay 5.

I think I shall give up this house at the end of the month—and probably go to New York, stay there not more than a fortnight, then go to England. This is what I have promised to do. But whether I shall *actually* do it, I don't know. I am not very anxious to go back to Europe.

One day you must come to Mexico. It is different from anything I have seen—life has quite a different *tempo* here.—Bynner & Johnson are still here, in the hotel.—With your revolver, gun & knife you would be just right here: though they are all mostly for show. Tell me your news. Yrs. D. H. LAWRENCE."

Expositions generally have to be built and completed in a hurry, as was the case with this one. So after a couple of weeks my work was done, and I was again hunting a job, only now I was chasing architects. I wanted to paint murals in their buildings. I managed to get to their private offices all right, but they were all "period" architects; few if any had a creative spark in them. Commercial copying of "old" works was what they wanted. Anything else was beyond their conception.

Needless to say, I had no chance with my creative work. One prominent architect got so enraged by just looking at

my work that he called me names and then he cried, "Are you trying to insult my intelligence?"

"That, Mr. O.," I answered calmly, "would be quite impossible."

"What did you say?" he exploded in fury.

"Pardon me," I said, "I forgot. But I shall make it plain. Where intelligence is absent, rudeness springs forth to confirm the lack of the former."

"You scoundrel, you, will you get out of my office!"

"With pleasure," I answered, as he started around his desk to pursue me. He was a big bulky fellow in the six-foot class. I took time enough at the door to bow for him before my retreat.

On the other hand, another architect said he had taken a liking to me, despite his belief that all modern art was crazy, and mine in particular, but he would nevertheless give me a chance to make some sketches for a job. If I could convince him that the spirit of the Twentieth Century could be made to conform to his Renaissance building, he would let me do the job.

For days I worked furiously at the sketches. Gótzsche even took a couple of days off from the studio to help me. We made some corking sketches, but they failed to convince the Renaissance architect. And so I tried in words, and in final despair I put my hands on my hips and shouted, "Bathroom culture is as far as you've got, and you shit in modern plumbing. How long must you mentally live in the past?"

Phlegmatically he just uttered, "Young buck, I like your spunk, but if you carry on like that, you'll never make any money."

"To hell with you and your money!" I sneered.

"What about having lunch with me?" he suggested.

"O.K.," said I.

And in his Pierce Arrow we drove to a place for lunch. We had a mutual esteem of each other, which was: you are quite hopeless, but in spite of it, there is something about you that I like. He was rather willing to recommend me to others, but he never gave me any of his own work.

Just as my list of architects was exhausted, I made a last contact. He was perhaps the most successful and prominent man in his field. When I showed him my work, he said, "It is very interesting, but so strange to me. Tell me something about modern art. I have never had time to study it."

I was more than willing, and he was a sympathetic listener. He had just finished a large estate in an exclusive district outside Los Angeles. The patio needed some mural painting. He suggested a semi-modern treatment and the depiction of the four seasons, and said that he would try to sell it to his client.

There was a lull in the studios, so Gótzsche helped me again with the sketches. They were to be executed in fresco. The architect liked our work, but the client didn't, so there was another job gone flooey, and valuable weeks had passed.

Then about this time we had a letter from Frieda:

"ZARAGOZA 4,
CHAPALA,

June 17, 1923 (dated by K. M.).

TO KNUD MERRILD.

DEAR DANES—There is Gótzsche's very cross letter about the Renaissance architect—it made me laugh—I am very sorry you are not having a good time, but also I am glad—that means I hope that you will sometime join us again and *we* will make a life together—Today is Sunday—I always think of you on Sundays and wish you were coming to dinner. Isabel, the cook, has just killed our cock—he made a noise like a hen instead of crowing like a cock. We are still not sure of our fate—but if we see a place we really like, we will have it and plant bananas—I am already very tired of not doing my own work.—Lawrence does not want to go to Europe, but he is not sure of what he wants.—The common people are also very nice but of course really wild—And I think we could have a good time, Merrild would love the lake and swimming, we could have natives to spin and weave and make pottery and I am sure this has never been painted—"

(Here Frieda leaves off, without signing the letter, and Lawrence concludes it thus :

“We are going on Tuesday up to Ocotlan on the lake to see if we can rent a little farm there. I am still doubtful if it would be safe. But if we decide on it I hope you will both come down & help us manage it. I will write to you at once when we get back: so don't write to New York to me until you hear again. And perhaps by then you will have found some good jobs. I think probably we should go to New York for a little while to settle business, even if I decided to rent a place: and come back in September, start then before the rains end. It's an uncertain life—and things never behave as they should.
D. H. L.”

We heartily agreed with Lawrence's last sentences and added that in certain instances Lawrence himself was just as uncertain, and despite his going to look for another place, we didn't dare believe he would take it. As things were, there was nothing we would have liked better than to go down to Mexico to help him and Frieda manage the place, swim, paint and grow bananas.

Then about this time a Danish friend of ours, also a painter, J. Winchell Böttern, and his wife arrived unexpectedly to join the struggling group of artists. And what a struggle! But new blood gives new hope. Since my arrival here, I had tried to locate another artist pal of mine, A. C. Wiboltt, who had been here for some time, but in vain. Great was the happy surprise when one day Böttern bumped into him down town.

A later arrival, also a Danish artist, was Ejnar Hansen. It looked as though Danish artists were invading Los Angeles. Needless to say, we backed each other up and had a swell time together. Individually, it was not so hot, each had his struggles.

I was now chasing poster work, lobby posters for theatres or bill-board design. I turned a good job down, painting bill-boards, as I wanted to do the designing, not copying.

In a roundabout way, the president of a literary club had learned that two friends of Lawrence were in town. A

lecture on Lawrence was scheduled and Gótzsche and I were invited to dinner and lecture as the guests of the club. After the lecture, the master of ceremonies stood up and told the assembly, in too extravagant words about us, how brilliant we were as artists, great adventurers, and a lot of bla-bla-nonsense, and, last but not least, about our close friendship with Lawrence. The crowd applauded generously and we didn't know what it was all about.

But then he continued: "We have just heard the brilliant and scholarly lecture by Mr. So-and-so on Lawrence as a writer. And now, I dare say, we are very fortunate to have with us tonight these friends of Lawrence—a rare opportunity indeed to get first-hand information about Lawrence, *the man*. I will ask each of the young artists to tell you about the private life of D. H. Lawrence!"

Enthusiastic applause. While the applause continued, we had a hasty conference in Danish.

To us it was a "hold-up" and we felt it was none of their damned business to stick their nose into Lawrence's private life. We decided to tell nothing. Which one of us got up first, I don't remember, but anyway the second said he agreed with the first and had nothing more to say. The short speech was, in essence, this: "As a writer, Lawrence belongs to the world. As a man, he belongs to himself, his wife and those he chooses. The world is fortunate to not only possess him as a writer, but also to know him as a man, because he tells about himself, his wife, his feelings, emotions and thoughts. In every book, perhaps on every page, he tells about himself. To get real first-hand information—much better than we can tell—about Lawrence, *the man*, read his books, not one, but *all* of them. Thank you!"

Restrained applause followed. It was evident that the disappointment was great. Before leaving, we were introduced to Upton Sinclair, with whom we had a short conversation. I am glad to state that he was neither nosey nor impertinent.

The struggle went on. I was now combing the department stores and factories to get something to design, but no luck.

It was then very comforting to get this letter from Lawrence:

"CHAPALA,
Wednesday,
(Postmark *June 27, 1923*).

TO KNUD MERRILD.

DEAR MERRILD—We were away two days travelling on the lake and looking at haciendas. One could easily get a little place. But now they are expecting more revolution, & it is so risky. Besides, why should one work to build a place & make it nice, only to have it destroyed.

So, for the present at least, I give it up. It's no good. Mankind is too unkind.

We shall leave next Monday for Mexico City—and probably shall be in New York by July 15th. I don't expect to care for the East: don't intend to stay more than a month. Then to England. It is no good, I know I am European so I may as well go back and try it once more.

You had a bad time chasing round, Gótzsche told me. Perhaps now you will be able to make some money. I hope so.

But I really hope that before long we may meet again, all of us, and try to make a life in common once more. If I can't stand Europe we'll come back to Mexico and spit on our hands and stick knives and revolvers in our belts—one really has to—and have a place here. But if Europe is at all possible, much better there. Because the Mexicans are rather American in that, that they would rather pull life down than let it grow up. And I am tired of that. I am tired of sensational, unmanly people. I want men with some honourable manhood in them, not this spiteful babyishness and playboy stupidity and mere greediness of most people. We will go on looking and preparing, you & Gótzsche and us, till we can really make a life that is not killed off as it was in Del Monte. Even if you have to go round the world before we can start, still we can wait and prepare. The 'world' has no life to offer. Seeing things doesn't amount to much. We have to be a few men with honour and fearlessness, and make a life together. There is nothing else, believe me.



Knud Merrild, Del Monte Ranch, New Mexico, 1922-3
(Grew a beard living in the mountains)

Tell Gótzsche I will write to him. I will settle the book covers when I get to New York, never fear. I had a nice letter from Gótzsche's father.—Auf Wiedersehen,

D. H. LAWRENCE."

How I treasure this letter. It gave me new thoughts and belief in myself. I fought on for what I believed in art and in life. I was glad to agree with what Lawrence says in his letter. But to take any stock in his plans, I could not. I neither believed nor disbelieved what he said about his going to England. I had trained myself to leave that part a perfect blank. How could one believe this or that; even Lawrence didn't believe in his own promises about such things.

I had to plan my own life. I wanted to go around the world, via the South Seas, to the Orient, and back to Europe. Even though the "world has no life to offer, and seeing things doesn't amount to much," Lawrence had seen the world, and I wanted that experience, not through somebody else, but for myself. Then I would be ready to join Lawrence if he had found a place. I was glad to know, very glad indeed, to know that he would still prepare and wait for us. I believed in Lawrence, but I had to get done with the world before I could peacefully settle down.

If the world was no better than Los Angeles, I had very little to expect. How I detested the taste of most people I met, as well as their general outlook upon life. The following letter from Lawrence fell on fertile soil:

"HOTEL DE SOTO,
NEW ORLEANS, LA.,
Sunday (July 15—1923 postmark).

To KNUD MERRILD.

DEAR MERRILD—Here we are—got so far on the journey to New York. The moment I am back in these States comes my old feeling of detestation over me again. But I no longer let it trouble me. I just resist them all the time, and shall continue to do so. Only one has to watch that in resisting them one doesn't become hard and

empty as they are. I want to keep myself alive inside, for the few people who are still living.

I expect we shall arrive in New York on Wednesday. I shall stay long enough to correct all proofs & get my MS. typed—then I suppose we shall go on to Europe. I am not very keen even on going to England.—I think what I would like best would be to go back to Mexico. If we were a few people we could make a life in Mexico. Certainly with this world I am at war.

I dreamed last night of Pips. But I feel that she too was a false little dog, a bit of . . .

New Orleans seems America—but more easy-going—same impudence, however.

Tell Gótzsche I will write him as soon as we are in New York.
D. H. L."

I was still without a job, my money running low, and I had exhausted all possibilities of a creative job for the present. I had to do something. Gótzsche, who was still working for the studio, suggested that I take a job there, too; he could get me *on*. But I wouldn't. I detested the atmosphere of the movies and if I couldn't get a creative position where I could inject some artistry, I would have nothing.

A block away from where we lived, a house-painter had his shop. I had on occasions stopped and talked with him, and he had offered me a job, but I had declined with thanks. Now I went to see him. He put me *on* and paid me a dollar more than his other men. I was to decorate a ceiling in a bank down town.

As Los Angeles was regarded as a *scab-town*, I could have gone to work without joining the Union, but that was unthinkable to me as I had always been a Union man, when and wherever I worked. So after all the struggle I was back in overalls on the scaffold with a Union card in my pocket, back on the old treadmill again. In a way, I didn't mind. It was a rest from chasing rainbows. There is a certain satisfaction in doing a job that one knows, and in doing it well. Further, it provided a livelihood and means for the next jump somewhere in the world.

At a luncheon given us by an architect in the University Club, we had met an engineer, or rather a consulting geologist, by the name of Harry R. Johnson. He was a tall, simple fellow, kind, helpful, understanding, and full of joy. He invited us to his home in Brentwood for the week-end. I will introduce the family now, as they were soon to enter into Lawrence's life and ours.

We accepted the week-end invitation and met his charming wife, Olivia, and her equally charming younger sister, Beatrice, the Bee, and the Johnsons' two young boys, Bill and Bo.

On the living-room table was a book in a new bright cover—"The Captain's Doll"—with my design. What a discovery. Mrs. Johnson was an ardent admirer of Lawrence's writings.

In the course of conversation, Johnson asked, "Now, what seems to be the reason for your not catching *on* in the kind of work you want, and should do?"

"None of the architects dare engage us on the bare foundations of our sketches," we answered. "They feel they have no assurance that we can carry out the actual work in a business-like manner as we are not an established organization and have no references here. If we could show them actual work done and give good references, they would be more willing to consider us. That being the general attitude, how can a young artist ever get a chance?"

"If I were an architect or had money," Johnson said, "I would give you the chance. Do you really think that if you had a wall to show, you would have a better chance?"

We thought so. Then he suggested that we decorate his library upstairs. He was sorry he could not pay us for it, but we could come and stay as their house guests, go swimming, enjoy the garden, and make it a sort of vacation. At leisure we could do the painting, have a lot of fun doing it and take as long as we liked. We thought it was a very fair offer, money or no money, so we gladly accepted.

As we had jobs by day, we had only evenings in which to make preliminary sketches, but in a week or two we would have something to show and be ready to start.

"I will turn you loose up there," Johnson said. "You can feel absolutely free to do what you like, but I think it would be wise to consider the architects and not to be too modern."

With renewed hope we left our new friends and went back to Los Angeles.

In the meantime, Lawrence had arrived in New York and we received this letter:

"CARE SELTZER,
5 W. 50TH ST.,
NEW YORK,
7 August, 1923.

To KNUD MERRILD.

DEAR MERRILD—I have almost decided not to go to Europe. Frieda is sailing on the 18th to England. But I think I shall stay this side. I don't want to go: don't know why.

I think, when Frieda has gone, I shall come to Los Angeles. We might like to spend the winter at Palm Springs or among the hills. Or we might go again to Mexico. And I should like to see you and Gótzsche and have a talk about the future. If there was nothing else to do, we might take a donkey and go packing among the mountains. Or we might find some boat, some sailing ship that would take us to the islands: you as sailors, myself as cook: nominal, Frieda, I suppose, will want to join me again at the end of October. Meanwhile we will have made some plan or other.

Probably I shall be in Los Angeles about the end of the month. Then we'll talk things over.

I care nothing for New York, & don't get much out of New Jersey.

Tell Gótzsche; and think of something.—I wish we were rich enough to buy a little ship. I feel like that now: like cruising the seas. I am a bit tired of the solid world. But perhaps it is quite nice to do as your engineer friend does, and build an adobe house in the foot-hills. Auf Wiedersehen,
D. H. LAWRENCE."

That letter was a bombshell to us. We never suspected that Lawrence and Frieda would part, even for a short time,

and that he would come to us in Los Angeles. We felt this about it: Frieda's longing for her children had become unbearable; she simply had to see them. Lawrence was stubborn and refused to go with her. We had no fear of divorce; we knew their marriage was too genuine for that.

We were a little worried thinking of Lawrence in Los Angeles—we could not look after him much now that we were working. How would he be without Frieda? Lawrence without Frieda, was almost unthinkable to us. We knew he hated big cities, and Los Angeles, the village masquerading as a city, would only be worse. Well, we contended that it would only be for a short time, then we would make for the sea. This idea exalted us. But why get excited? He might yet change his mind a hundred times. But even so, it was very gratifying that Lawrence should, of all places and of all people, think of us in a moment of distress.

We were happy if, in a small way, we would have an opportunity to be something to him. We prepared for all eventualities.

Then two days later I had this note from our engineer friend:

"Aug. 9—23.

DEAR MR. MERRILD—Here is a crude sketch of the upstairs room which I hope will serve for your purposes. I will see you when I come back in two weeks on or about August 23.—Hastily but very truly,

HARRY R. JOHNSON."

On the 23rd, we had our sketches finished and accepted by the Johnson family. Then we both quit our jobs and went out to Brentwood. A couple of days later we had this note from Lawrence:

*"BUFFALO,
Wednesday evening,
22 Aug.*

TO KNUD MERRILD.

DEAR MERRILD—I have got so far—am staying in Buffalo till Friday at Mrs. Freeman's. Shall probably stay a day

in Chicago, also—perhaps—in Salt Lake City. I will telegraph the time I arrive. It will be about a week from now.

D. H. LAWRENCE."

Evidently he was on his way to Los Angeles now. His plans were definite, and we felt sure he would not let himself be detained much en route, but come straight to us. We told the Johnsons about it and they were very sorry that they could not house him, now that we were occupying the guest room. But we would find a place for him in the vicinity so he could come and stay with us in the daytime.

We maintained our rooms in Los Angeles and had asked our landlady to call us up if any telegrams arrived, and she did.

On August 30th we went in our Lizzie to fetch Lawrence at the station. It was a happy reunion, and when Lawrence stepped into the Lizzie of old, he couldn't help wisecracking about the old tin can.

We took him to my room; it was gloomy and simple, too simple for Lawrence; he didn't like it, but he stayed overnight.

Next morning we came in from Brentwood to take him to the Hotel Miramar in Santa Monica. We lunched together at the hotel, and in the afternoon took him with us to the Johnsons for tea.

After tea, he went with us upstairs to see our mural decorations which we were composing over the signs of the Zodiac. Inside the room he stood still for a moment, then he said, "Who knows, perhaps there is more to astrology than we realize?" Then he told us about the supposed effect the moon had upon the nerve centre in the neck.

He liked our work, and was more generous in his praise than I remember he had ever been before. The next day he came again and watched us paint.

We had a hard time keeping him away from our brushes. He wanted desperately to help us paint. But we didn't let him. As we were using the technique of fresco, it was too risky to let an amateur try his hand. The thin water-colour might easily run and ruin the work. The Johnsons,

too, pleaded with us to let Lawrence try his luck, and also the Bee wanted to have a try at it, but we were firm in our refusals.

On Sunday, all of us went on a picnic in Topango Canyon, and on Monday, we were Lawrence's guests at the Hotel Miramar for dinner.

Lawrence was not the same as he had been at Del Monte. Obviously he was not in his right environment. Who is, living in a hotel room? And without Frieda he was restless and in a lonely mood. When he came over to see us, he would be gloomy, but our company and the Johnsons soon cheered him up. Gótzsche and I felt responsible for his well-being and a little guilty about it. But what could we do? We did our best. We had to work on our mural and so were fairly busy. He only came to join us in the afternoon, in order to leave us to our work as much as possible. All morning and noon he was left to himself, and with no work to do, or no place to potter around, he was restless and lonesome. He spent most of his time wandering along the beach or wharf. To describe him—judging from his behaviour, looks and bits of conversation—I will quote freely from his own writings:

"To be alone, mindless and memoryless by the sea. To be alone with a long, wide shore and land, heartless, soulless. As alone and as absent and as present as an aboriginal, dark on the sand in the sun. The strange falling-away of everything. The palms in the sea-wind were sere like old mops. The jetty straddled motionless from the shore. He had it all to himself. And there, with his hands in his pockets, he drifted into indifference. The far-off, far-off, far-off indifference. The world revolved and revolved and disappeared. Like a stone that has fallen into the sea, his old life, the old meaning, fell, and rippled, and there was vacancy, with the sea and the shore in it. Far-off, far-off, as if he had landed on another planet, as a man might land after death. Leaving behind the body of care. Even the body of desire. Shed. All that had meant so much to him, shed. All the old world and self of care, the beautiful care as well as the weary care, shed like a dead

body. The landscape?—he cared not a thing about the landscape. Love?—he was absolved from love, as if by a great pardon. Humanity?—there was none. Thought?—falling like a stone into the sea. The great, the glamorous past?—worn thin, frail, like a frail, translucent film of shell thrown up on the shore.”

“The past all gone so frail and thin. What have I cared about, what have I cared for? There is nothing to care about. Absolved from it all. The world a new leaf. And on the new leaf, nothing. The white clarity of the fragile atmosphere. Without a mark, without a record, ‘Why have I cared? I don’t care. How strange it is here, to be soulless and alone.’”

That was the perpetual refrain in the back of his mind. To be soulless and alone, by the Pacific Ocean in America. “Why do I wrestle with my soul? I have no soul.”

Clear as the air about him this truth possessed him. “Why do I talk of the soul? My soul is shed like a sheath. I am soulless and alone, soulless and alone. That which is soulless is perforce alone.”

“The sun was curving to the crest of the dark ridge. As soon as the sun went behind the ridge, shadows fell on the shore, and a cold wind came up, he would go home.”

“Home again. But what was home? The fish have the vast ocean for home. And man has timelessness and nowhere. ‘I won’t delude myself with the fallacy of home,’ he said to himself. ‘The four walls are a blanket I wrap around myself in timelessness and nowhere, to go to sleep.’

“Back to Frieda. Frieda? Another bird like himself. If only she wouldn’t speak, talk, feel. The weary habit of talking and having feelings. When a man has no soul, he has no feelings to talk about. He wants to be still. And ‘meaning’ is the most meaningless of illusions. An outworn garment.”

“Frieda and he? It was time they both agreed that nothing has any meaning. Meaning is a dead letter, when a man has no soul. And speech is like a valley of dead leaves and dust, stifling the air. Human beings should

learn to make weird, wordless cries, like the animals, and cast off the clutter of words."

"Old dust and dirt of corpses: words and feelings. The decomposed body of the past whirling and choking us, language, love, and meaning. When a man loses his soul, he knows what a small, weary bit of clockwork it has been. Who dares to be soulless finds the new dimension of life."

"Home, to tea. The clicking of the clock. Tick-tock! Tick-tock! The clock. Home to tea. Just for clockwork's sake."

"No home, no tea. Insouciant soullessness. Eternal indifference. Perhaps it is only the great pause between carings. But it is only in this pause that one finds the meaninglessness of meanings—like old husks which speak dust. Only in this pause that one finds the meaninglessness of meanings, and the other dimension, the reality of timelessness and nowhere. Home to tea! Do you hear the clock tick? And yet there is timelessness and nowhere. And the clock means nothing with its ticking. And nothing is so meaningless as meaning."

The following Sunday, September the ninth, Lawrence came over to the Johnsons' for lunch, and as we had planned to be in Lompoc the next day to witness the rare phenomenon of a total eclipse of the sun, we left in the afternoon, in Johnson's big car, for Santa Barbara. We stopped at places of interest on the way. Like olden days in Taos, we were singing most of the way. We had a good time.

We arrived in Santa Barbara about nine in the evening. We visited some of Johnson's friends, where the womenfolks were to stay overnight. At about eleven, we men went to Roderick White's house. He was not at home, and perhaps didn't know we were coming, but as we were tired from the motor drive and had to get up early in the morning, we went to bed without waiting for our host, Lawrence in one room, Johnson in another and Gótzsche and I in a third. Some time after midnight, Mr. White came home. He went to his room to go to bed and found a stranger there, he went to another and a third room, all occupied with

strangers fast asleep. Undisturbed, he went on to the porch to sleep on a cot.

The next morning we went to Lompoc; there we met a party from Carmel, among them Jeanne d'Orge, who wrote an epitaph on Lawrence in *Supplement to the Carmelite*, 1930, called "Lawrence the Wayfarer." It is a good description of the events, and as I have little about it in my diary, I will quote:

"D. H. Lawrence was one of a small party of artists who came to Lompoc from Santa Barbara the year of the total eclipse. The Remsens brought them to Lompoc because James Worthington, Dr. Burton, the Josselyns and some others from Carmel were there, with all the cameras and astronomical instruments needed to take pictures of the eclipse. They had chosen Lompoc as being the one place within the belt of totality most likely to escape mists and high fog. Their 'hunch' was good, for as it turned out, the Carmel expedition was the only one in California with clear pictures to show of that hidden splendour in the sun which is called the Corona.

"When Henry Williams, his wife and I dashed into the village, late, the night before the eclipse, we found a little Carmel, centered and very much at home in the one and only restaurant. Rural inhabitants stood about—eyes popping, ears wide. Jimmy Worthington was in a state of high tension; not only was he sure he had forgotten a most important technical detail, but he was absolutely certain that some of his corps of helpers would be missing in the morning. They had fallen from grace and slipped off to see seven battleships that had crashed on the rocks a few miles down the coast. There was a rumour that the road was blocked and many cars stalled. The atmosphere into which we walked in that little restaurant was electric. For us—sheer pleasure—the thrill before the play begins, a thousand times intensified—and tomorrow morning the great curtain of the sky would lift—and then—what?

"In the morning we were storming the doors three hours before opening time. Each man was at his post, truants included. Henry, Mary and I received orders to drive into

the hills to a certain high place. We were to follow a road which would be crumbly and white with chalk dust, as we were to pass through a plant for making talcum powder, and from there climb the white cliffs as far as we might. We were given an ordinary small camera and told that if a sudden mist should come blurring down on the town our little photograph might save the day for science. It had happened so before. We were just about to go when Rem's party unexpectedly drove in. We heard the howling of the lions. Beside D. H. Lawrence there were two distinguished Danish painters. They were all sent off with us so as to be out of the way. No sooner did we turn our faces to the hills than everything changed. Lions turned into mice. Howlings into squeaks. D. H. Lawrence turned into a nobody. So did the painters. So did we all.

"We found the place. We climbed the cliffs. Our feet sank deep into white chalk dust that crunched like snow. By the time we had found a high white mound the line of the moon showed dark against the sun. We were circled by hills and the hills spread wide to the great circle of the horizon. We looked up at the sky through little bits of smoked glass. It was slow—the waiting.

"D. H. Lawrence had a voice like rustling autumn leaves. He had a good mask for a volcano. He made flat jokes. So did the painters. So did we all. We felt queer. We began to feel cold . . . up the spine . . . down the arms. We didn't say so at first but we all knew—more and more we knew—that we were waiting for the world to end. We were a group of very small shivering, awed creatures, set upon a hill to await the ending of the world. The birds knew it too. They flew uneasily into the trees and they made crying sounds. The beasts knew it. They whined in the distance and made disagreeable, lonely, helpless sounds and soon they didn't make any noise at all. We drew closer together. We made sillier jokes. We said out loud how horrible it was to be waiting for the end of the world. Teeth chattered. Bones creaked. Darkness grew. We were shadows. We were black shapes. We were not there at all.

"But the stars were there—great stars were in the sky, and on the far circle of the horizon sunset colours burned and dawn colours and twilight colours . . . night and day, twilight and dawn, all stood in the sky together. What was it flashed from the horizon—across and across—like a wing—a black wing—a bright shadow—the shadow of the moon sweeping over the earth, swift as light—black, yet bright—shedding a 'queer green light—wherever the light touched, earth opened and came forth in strange, unearthly, horrible, beautiful forms and shapes. (Henry Williams, who had charge of the camera and was lying flat on the ground, said afterwards that looking up he could see through our faces into our bones.) No sooner that over than our eyes were compelled upwards. Something looked through our eyes into the deep centre of the night sky, where a great black disk burned with hidden sunfire like the heart of a great flower, and suddenly the great flower opened and shot forth countless petals of fire that streamed and spread and filled the whole sky and the earth, and we who were on the earth trembled into utter stillness from sheer wonder.

* * *

"When the world ends it begins all over again—new and opposite. We came down from that hill a merry lot of Everybodies and we all knew each other in a way that had never been before. We kept together all day. We went down to see the seven battleships on the rocks. The sea looked like a pool to us and the ships no more than the toys some child had carelessly destroyed and was not crying about, either. We kept together all day and when we parted we didn't say good-bye. . . .

"You see, don't you, why if I should be asked whether I had met D. H. Lawrence, poet and sometimes prophet, I could truthfully answer, 'No.'"

My diary said: "When we came upon the shore at Point Honde, where the seven battleships lay crushed on the rocks, two bodies of drowned sailors were being carried up the cliffs. In our sensitive condition we shuddered and felt queer. It made a deep impression on us."

Shortly we finished our murals. We had had a fine time doing it, and, contrary to our agreement, Johnson wanted to pay us for it, too. We first refused to accept. The friendship bestowed upon us by the whole family, we said, was a royal reward. And I still think it was one of the grandest gestures of generosity I have ever met by Americans—to be taken, two complete strangers, into their home. The trust they showed in us is one of those fine things in life that make one happy and make struggle fade into nothing. Trust and friendship are jewels in life.

Johnson insisted on a material reward and, as we felt poor enough, we finally accepted with thanks from our hearts. Architects, movie directors and magnates of industry didn't even trust us with a small job, but here was a man who not only trusted us with a job, but his whole family as well. I pray I shall always be worthy of their friendship.

The murals finished, Lawrence went with us to Los Angeles, where we rented a room with light housekeeping for him. It was in a rooming house on Grand Avenue, about a block and a half away from us. Lawrence was determined that we should try to go to sea. "I am a bit tired of the solid world!" he had said. He would hire out as cook and we as sailors. We thought it a grand idea; we would like it very much, but were quite sceptical about it. But Lawrence was keen on it. Gótzsche and I went back to work again, he to the movies, I to another paint firm, in order to make and save money to go somewhere with Lawrence. While we were at work, Lawrence was actually chasing ships and seeking hire in Los Angeles Harbour, San Pedro and Wilmington. But I am sorry to say he met with absolute failure. It might have been possible for us, individually, to get on ships, but three dilettantes on one ship was too much to expect.

His plan failing, Lawrence again turned to his old idea of finding a place in Mexico. I was not so keen on that now. I would rather have gone to the South Seas. It had been my dream for years and I was now nearer to it geographically than ever. So far no plans were definite.

One day Lawrence said that we ought to have some fun;

he would invite us out for an evening—theatre, concert or whatever we would like, no matter what, he would take us and foot the bill. We chose to go to a place to dine and dance, and like a good sport he came along, although he was very much surprised that we should choose a dance hall. But by gosh, living out there on the mountain top all winter, we felt like sailors coming to port. We enjoyed courting the girls in a dance to the enticing music of a jazz band. Lawrence half-spoiled our fun, however. Each time we came back to him and our table after a dance, he made sarcastic remarks.

He loathed the music and detested the tail-wagging that was called modern dance. He asked us if that was really what we wanted most. Quite frankly, even risking his disgust, we admitted that, for the time being, that was what we wanted. He shook his head, but as soon as the band struck up again, we left him for the dance floor with some lovely girl. Back again, we told him not to sit there like a chaperon, but be gay and try his luck with the girls; we were sure he would be successful. But the very thought was repulsive to him.

"Hello, Santa Claus," a girl said as she danced by, waving a hand at Lawrence.

"You see," we said, "the girls are pining to dance with the mysterious man in the red beard."

Lawrence grinned. In my imagination, his head sprouted horns. He was the Prince of Darkness, the chief of the fallen angels. Lucifer himself; but what a dear devil, poking us with sarcasm and denouncing the world and its likes. But he was also our benefactor.

We broke up rather early, about eleven. We didn't want to tire Lawrence. Not that he was bored; beneath it all I felt he took an interest in studying life.

It was a lovely night, the weather was fine, pleasantly cool, so we walked home. On our way we passed many bill-boards displaying one of the posters Gótzsche and I had made in New York—"The Count of Monte Cristo," now playing in Los Angeles. We were disgusted with the liberties taken in reproducing our design. We cursed that,

and we cursed having to make a living as decorators. "Why won't the world let us live as artists?" I said.

"You can't have your cake and eat it," answered Lawrence.

"I don't want any cake," I retorted. "I am not an old Greek, I am a Viking, I want a hog—to eat and have, too. I want SÆRIMNE, the hog in Nordic mythology, which when you cut out any chunk of him and eat it, the boar grows whole again while eating, and you still have Særimne everlastingly. And besides, that is what you are having, you write and eat, still you have your writing. We are not even asking for a fat hog—a lean boar will do for us."

"Still you can't have your cake and eat it," said Lawrence stubbornly.

As far as I remember, Lawrence didn't call on Will Levington Comfort. We had told Lawrence that we didn't like him, but didn't mention his peculiar greeting to us. We thought it would do nobody any good.

The Press was unaware of Lawrence's visit here. He didn't want to meet anyone and saw but few people, among them one of the leading male stars of the movies. The meeting, Lawrence related, had been very boring, but all I remember in words were these: "Poor fellow, he was so utterly self-conscious that it was pitiful." He received him in riding togs, flanked by two lovely animals, huge Great Danes.

One evening, Lawrence went with us and the Bóttens to the Hollywood Bowl. He didn't care much for the music and he was in a half-devilish mood and sneered and made jokes, and we had to muffle our laughs as well as we could, to the irritation and disgust of our music-loving neighbours.

After the Bowl concert, we went to the Bóttens' home, a light housekeeping room with a hidden stove in the closet, for midnight tea. Lawrence was so gay and lively that we woke the landlady. She came and rapped at the door and scolded us. Lawrence acted like a repentant schoolboy. He was most amusing. When she left, we could contain our laughter no longer and, hearing it, she came back, furious. What a termagant she was! We promised to

behave, but we were in such high spirits and boisterous mood that we couldn't help ourselves. But for fear the Bóttens might be told to move if we carried on any further, we left, holding our stomachs, aching from laughter.

On Sundays, Gótzsche and I loaded our tent and camp outfit on the car and took Lawrence and Bótt¹ to the beach at Santa Monica. We tried hard to get Lawrence into a bathing suit, but to no avail. While we were in the water, playing ball or doing gymnastics on the beach, he just sat on his haunches, on a blanket in the sand, arms around his knees, a tiny speck of colour in a vast beach crowd, alone in his own separateness.

In a dance hall and on the beach, Lawrence was a "lost chicken" or hen if you like, not quite able to partake in the fun of the ducklings. He hated crowds. So do I, in general, but I think there is something fascinating about a crowd. Anyway, it is a great part of modern life, whether we like it or not.

Lawrence didn't like Los Angeles and was growing more and more restless to get away—"Somewhere." Somewhere in Mexico, of that he was sure now. He didn't want to go alone, but to have us along. Gótzsche was willing, but I was undecided. I had some hard days with myself. It was very tempting not to reflect and just give in and go with them somewhere.

But something in me revolted, many voices in me spoke: "You are talking Lawrence, thinking Lawrence, living and acting Lawrence, your life, your being is through Lawrence, you are saturated with Lawrence. Shed the burden of Lawrence, his dominating, overpowering influence, and live your own life, get out from under his shadow and grow into your own being, go your own way, make your own experience and know by yourself."

Yet I liked Lawrence, I believed in him and I had the greatest respect and admiration for him. I liked the idea of going to Mexico with him, even if compelled to see and experience it through him, and to settle and live *his* new life.

No, I cannot be content to be a dot of cotton thrown

¹ Bótt^s—short for Bóttens.



Lawrence, the two Danes and a friend

aimlessly about on the waves of the ocean. I must have a compass, a course and a rudder, be it even in a nutshell on the ocean. I want to steer a course, not aimlessly drift around on the waves of emotion or the erratic feelings of D. H. Lawrence. Without Frieda as an anchor, I knew it would be a failure. I must sail my own little ship. I must be free, by myself and have the courage of my own convictions and make my own adventures in the world, in life, and in thought.

I could not make up my mind what I wanted most to do. I knew part of me wanted to stick to Lawrence and Götzsche. Also I knew that I would rather go to the South Seas than to Mexico. I tried to persuade Lawrence to wait a little longer so we could make some more money and then be able to pay our way on a freighter to the Islands.

We met every evening to discuss it and try to come to an agreement and make a final decision. But really, I had no desire to stick knife and revolver in my belt for protection against revolutionaries, and to live inland on the continent among half-civilized people. I wanted to be near the ocean, where I could swim and breathe the salt air. I would much rather live among primitive, carefree, peace-loving people. I was longing to fulfil my Gauguin pilgrimage.

"You can't go back," Lawrence said, as he lectured to me on the South Seas.

"What do you know about the Islands?" I said to myself about Lawrence. "You have only been there a few hours while your boat stopped on the way from Australia. I didn't have to say that out loud; he knew my thoughts, and he wanted to prevent me from going and to persuade me to go with them. Many, many times has he repeated and said to me:

"Those islands in the middle of the Pacific are the most unbearable places on earth. It simply stops the heart to be translated there, unknown ages back, back into that life, that pulse, that rhythm. The scientists say the South Sea Islanders belong to the Stone Age. It seems absurd to class people according to their implements. And yet there is something in it. The heart of the Pacific is still

the Stone Age; in spite of steamers. The heart of the Pacific seems like a vast vacuum, in which, mirage-like, continues the life of myriads of ages back. It is a phantom—persistence of human beings who should have died, by our chronology, in the Stone Age. It is a phantom, illusion-like trick of reality: the glamorous South Seas.

“The Pacific Ocean holds the dream of immemorial centuries. It is the great blue twilight of the vastest of all evenings; perhaps of the most wonderful of all dawns. Who knows?

“It must once have been a vast basin of soft, lotus-warm civilization, the Pacific. Never was such a huge man-day swung down into slow disintegration as here. And now the waters are blue and ghostly with the end of immemorial peoples. And phantom-like the islands rise out of it, illusions of the glamorous Stone Age.

“Samoa, Tahiti, Raratonga, Nukuheva: the very names are asleep and aforgetting. The sleep-forgotten past magnificence of human history. ‘Trailing clouds of glory.’

“There on the island, where the golden-green great palm trees chinked in the sun and the elegant reed houses let the sea breeze through, and people went naked and laughed a great deal and put flowers in their hair, great red *hibiscus* flowers, and *frangipani*. There they are, these South Sea Islanders, beautiful big men with their golden limbs and their laughing, graceful laziness. And they will call you brother. But why cannot one truly be brother?

“The truth of the matter is, one cannot go back. Some men can: renegade. But Gauguin couldn’t really go back; and I know now that I could never go back. Back towards the past, savage life. One’s soul seems under a vacuum in the South Seas. One cannot go back. It is one’s destiny inside one.

“There are these people, these ‘savages.’ One does not despise them. One does not feel superior. But there is a gulf. There is a gulf in time and being. I cannot commingle my being with theirs.

“There is an invisible hand grasps my heart and prevents it opening too much to these strangers.

"They are beautiful, they are like children, they are generous: but they are more than this. They are far off, and in their eyes is an easy darkness of the soft, uncreate past. In a way, they are uncreate. Far be it from me to assume any 'white' superiority. But they are savages. They are gentle and laughing and physically very handsome. But it seems to me that in living so far, through all our bitter centuries of civilization, we have still been living onwards, forwards. God knows it looks like a *cul de sac* now. But turn to the first Negro, and then listen to your own soul. And your own soul will tell you that however false and foul our forms and systems are now, still, through the many centuries since Egypt, we have been living and struggling forwards along some road that is no good, and yet is a great life development.

"We have struggled on in us that we must still go on. We may have to smash things. Then let us smash. And our road may have to take a great swerve that seems a retrogression.

"But we can't go back. Whatever else the South Sea Islander is, he is centuries and centuries behind us in the life struggle, the consciousness—struggle, the struggle of the soul into fullness. There is his woman, with her knotted hair and her dark, inchoate, slightly sardonic eyes. I like her, she is nice. But I would never want to touch her. I could not go back on myself so far. Back to their uncreate condition. She has soft, warm flesh, like warm mud. Nearer the reptile, the Saurian Age. *Noli me tangere*.

"We can't go back. We can't go back to the savages: not a stride.

"We can be in sympathy with them. We can take a great curve in their direction, onwards. But we cannot turn the current of our life backwards, back towards their soft, warm twilight and uncreate mud. Not for a moment. If we do it for a moment, it makes us sick.

"We can only do it when we are renegade. The renegade hates life itself. He wants the death of life. So these many 'reformers' and 'idealists' who glorify the savages in America. They are death-birds, life haters. Renegades.

"We can't go back: and Gauguin couldn't really go back. Much as he hated the civilized humanity, he knew. He couldn't go back to the savages. He wanted to. He tried to. And he couldn't.

"But there you are. Try to go back to the savages, and you feel as if your very soul was decomposing inside you.

"That is what you feel in the South Seas, anyhow: as if your soul was decomposing inside you.

"And with any savages the same, if you try to go their way, take their current of sympathy.

"Yet, as I say, we must make a great swerve in our onward-going life-course now, to gather up again the savage mysteries. But this does not mean going back on ourselves.

"Try to go back to the savages, and you feel as if your very soul was decomposing inside you.

"And that is what really happens. If you prostitute your psyche by returning to the savages, you gradually go to pieces. Before you go back, you *have* to decompose. And a white man decomposing is a ghastly sight.

"We have to go on, on, on, even if we must smash a way ahead.

"The golden age of the past. What a nostalgia we all feel for it. Yet we won't want it when we get it. Try the South Seas.

"Life is never a thing of continuous bliss. There is no paradise. Fight and laugh and feel bitter and feel bliss: and fight again. Fight, fight. That is life.

"Why pin ourselves down on a paradisial ideal? It is only ourselves we torture."

"We cannot go back," Lawrence said.

But I didn't call it retreat. But a realization, a new push onward, towards a new life and peace. To shed our terrible burden of mechanized slavery, terror of deadly gases, machine-guns, air raids and false conception of life. A stark misuse of knowledge that will be its own end, barbarism and destruction in the name of Christianity. What a terrible case of indigestion the world has from the one bite from the apple of knowledge.

"Life is never a thing of continued bliss," he said.

"There is no paradise. Fight, fight. That is life."

Still we dream of paradise, even if its name be Utopia. Life is more than fight, we must fight for something, even if it be only hope, perhaps our only paradise. A hopeless fight is not a fight but a licking. Hell! Greediness, murder, dictatorships, and all other vices, are fast becoming industrialized. Civilization today is hell industrialized, hell, hell, hell on a gigantic scale. Why must I not clamour for the isle of peace?

To go down into the back country of Mexico and live among Mexican Indians and half-breeds, facing revolutionaries with knife and revolver in my belt, even if mostly for show, was less attractive to me than the South Seas. And to live in Mexican suburbs of cities, more or less civilized, I didn't want. Not now. And when Lawrence at last put down a date for departure, applying the screws on me for my final decision, I simply said:

"I don't want to go, not now, I know it will be a failure. And besides, why pin ourselves down to a paradisial ideal? It is only ourselves we torture!

"I must have my own fight, I will go on, and on, and smash my own way ahead.

"Then when you have found a place, for a 'new life,' *your* paradise, I shall be glad to join you."

"If you *must* go your own way," he said calmly, "you must. But even if you have to go round the world, still we can wait for you and prepare. We have to be a few men with honour and fearlessness, and make a life together. There is nothing else, believe me. I shall see you again some day, I am sure of that."

"I hope so," I said. "And I want to say that even if it should be years before we meet again, and we should cease to communicate with each other by letter, I shall always be happy just to think that you are somewhere in the world, and to know that you are back of me. I shall always remember you and never forget what you have been to me. And I shall continue to do my best to be worthy of your friendship.

"Thank you, Lawrence. Thank you for everything."

"Don't thank me," he answered, "it has been nice to know you, Merrild."

I extended my hand and in a firm grip we shook hands.

I looked into his eyes, those piercing eyes that saw everything. How mild they were now, how deeply expressive—so sincere, honest and so kind. They were faintly glossy, as mine must have been. It hurt me so to say no, and emotions were hammering inside my chest. I felt a great display of sentimentality coming on, and we started to talk about the weather. Men are not sentimental, men don't cry!

In a few days, Gótzsche and Lawrence would be leaving. Gótzsche had already quit his job. They were shopping and getting their passports in order. I worked at my new job, decorating a jewelry store. We met every evening, and I had the hardest time with myself, not to give in and go along with them.

Then one evening there was a lull in our conversation, and Lawrence said unexpectedly.

"Merrild, you are a failure in America; you are not successful here as an artist. You should be happy to be a failure in America. Why not try Mexico? I think your possibilities for appreciation and understanding are better there."

The psychologist at work, I thought, but I answered: "I have been a year and a half in America. I have shown twice—once in New York, once in Santa Fé. Give a fellow a chance. I agree, however, that I am not a slam-bang success, but neither am I a failure—not yet, not until I give up, and I am not giving up just now."

Naturally Gótzsche had also done his best to persuade me to come along, but I had also tried to make him see how impossible it was under present circumstances to go to Mexico. With Frieda in Europe, Lawrence would be restless, and I foresaw a wild chase around Mexico and felt that Lawrence would soon tire, give up the search, give in to Frieda and return to England.

"It is folly, I tell you, you'd better stay here. Now that

• you have a few hundred dollars together, save it. If neither of us goes to Mexico with Lawrence, he will probably go to England. And the sooner, the better—for everybody concerned. If he then comes back with Frieda, it will be a different matter. We will have saved some more money, we will be more independent, and it will be easier for us to go along and try a new place. You know I like Lawrence as much as ever, but to run open-eyed into a fiasco is so much against me, that I can't do it."

"I feel fortunate," said Gótzsche, "to be able to go to Mexico with Lawrence no matter how it turns out, and I am willing to spend my last penny with him."

To such devotion and reverence for Lawrence I could say no more, but wish them the best of luck.

We divided among us the letters Lawrence had written to us both. Unfortunately Gótzsche has not been able to find any of his letters or he would have lent them to me. They are probably all lost. I regret that I have lost some of mine too.

During the last few days they were here, I had to work overtime on the job and came home late at night, so I saw very little of them. September twenty-third this note was put under my door.

*"Sunday night,
Sept. 23.*

DEAR MERRILD—We are staying till *Tuesday*, so will see you tomorrow, at Mrs. Mott's probably.

The railway—for Tuesday—is the Southern Pacific.

D. H. L."

As Lawrence speaks of the Motts in his letter, I will introduce them now.

"At Mrs. Mott's" meant a small lunch-room, a wooden shack on an empty lot, across the street, where we ate most of our meals. The Motts were a hard-working couple. She did the serving, he, Walter, Irish-Scotch, a World War veteran in the six-foot class, did the cooking. She was Danish, round, and the picture of health, with beautiful straw-coloured hair—a typical daughter of the Vikings.

They were nice people; Lawrence liked them. The Motts have been prosperous—now they have a restaurant. I ran into them some time ago. I asked if they remembered Lawrence. They did.

“What did you think of him, Walter?” I asked.

“Some *hombre*, I should say. A queer guy, if you ask me. But he was all right, though.”

And she said: “Oh, he was such a nice man, very kind and always so polite. I still have the post cards he sent us from Mexico.”

I don’t remember if we met at Motts’ the next day; in fact, I remember nothing more; my mind is a blank. Perhaps I had to go somewhere in my car, or they had left previous to their schedule in order to stop at Palm Springs to visit Mrs. Freeman. Both possibilities are evident from the card I received from Lawrence from Palm Springs.

“PALM SPRINGS,
Wed.

TO KNUD MERRILD.

That was an absurd way to leave—but saying no good-bye is supposed to mean meeting again soon. This is a pale whitish desert—a bit deathly. And no Bessie Freeman—but we saw her house. And after Los A., I was very happy lying under a tree by a little stream all morning—no sound of trams in Grand Avenue. Hope Lizzie behaved.—Grüsse,
D. H. L.”

Now they had gone. I was alone. At first, I didn’t mind it; I was glad to be alone, and I didn’t want to see anybody. I worked hard at the job—day and night. I wanted to save as much as possible in the shortest possible time, so I could quit my job and be free again to paint pictures and go somewhere.

About this time I had a letter from Walter Ufer. I will quote it in part, as reference to some of it is made in Lawrence’s and Gótzsche’s letters to follow. The letter was mailed a few days after its date and did not reach me until Lawrence and Gótzsche had left.

"TAOS, N. M.
Sept. 18, 1923.

TO KNUD MERRILD.

MY DEAR MERRILD—Yours of the 13th tonight. It is raining—the mountains are cut off low by the mist—like sketch."

Then he had made a drawing on the letter, and goes on to make some personal remarks that have no significance here. He continues:

"I have tonight written to a friend, Ralph Pearson, San Diego, California, and urged him to go to Los Angeles to meet you, Gótzsche and Lawrence. Pearson is an etcher of modern tendencies. He is much dissatisfied and I have told him who you are. He is very intelligent and knows Lawrence by his works. If I could tear myself loose, but I cannot, I would go with you fellows. I would like nothing finer than Lawrence and Frieda, you and Gótzsche. In November I must again go to New York to serve on the National Academy Jury, and I haven't got a cent of money. I will come back to Taos to do more work.

I have been invited to send to the Rome (Italy) International—expenses paid. And I must make a painting for it."

Then a page of non-essentials here, and he continues:

"I most likely will get a few murals to paint for the State Capitol of Missouri. They want to see my work and must send it soon to Kansas City, Mo. This will keep me busy next year.

With the best wishes to you, Gótzsche and Lawrence. Please let Lawrence read this letter. I am also sending him one tonight. I did not know his address sooner.—
Sincerely yours, WALTER UFER.

Mary and Scotty say their best.

W. U."

After some time I began to miss Lawrence and Gótzsche very much, especially after I had received letters from them, telling of their trip. I wanted to be with them, to be free,

and I damned my job down in hell. But I stuck to my plans.

They were both very generous in writing to me—as much as three times a week. Some of the letters I have lost, I am sorry to say, but I am glad for what I have and will bring them in chronological order. Gótzsche wrote to me in Danish, so I have translated his letter into English, freely, but conscientiously as to their meaning.

The first letter from Mexico is from Gótzsche.

“Sept. 27, 1923.

To KNUD MERRILD.

DEAR MERRILD—We arrived this morning at Guaymas. All is well. We had no fuss about taxes and only a light duty examination. The journey, of course, was a little tiring, and it is so hot here, we have not yet rested up. Lawrence is sleeping, I think. We stay at a big, very primitive Mexican hotel. Stone floors all over and army cots with only a pair of sheets. It is so different from U.S.A. that it is hard to believe that we are only one night's journey from the border.

Everything is so poor, in disrepair and primitive, but picturesque and beautiful. The harbour here looks most like a Norwegian Fjord, with small rock islands sprinkled on the water, very beautiful with the dolphins showing their black back-fins above the water now and then, and over the town hovers some big black, red-headed, rapacious birds. Like to know what kind of birds they are; and at the harbour, or rather beach, for it is not a real harbour, native workers with bare torsos, dark brown skin. It is really rather interesting here, but as I said, very poor and dreary, so much so it almost depresses one.

This morning I went to fetch my luggage, one of the suitcases was smashed, one side cut clean away, so its contents were hanging out. I had to buy a new one. The railroad, which is American, promised to pay, and a report has been sent in. Monday we leave from here. We are thinking of renting a small boat tomorrow, just for a trip. How are the Bótters, Motts and all our acquaintances? Greet them and be greeted from your affectionate friend.

K. G. GÓTZSCHE.”

Then they moved on to Navajoa and I had letters from them both. This from Lawrence:

“NAVAJOA,
Friday, 5th Oct.

To KNUD MERRILD.

DEAR MERRILD—Well here we are, still grilling in the sun of Navajoa. We came down yesterday from Minas Nuevas, over a road *much* worse than any Del Monte roads, & forty miles of it. I am bruised wherever I look.—A circus follows us down the coast, & the lions roar all night. The turkeys put their heads through the door—the doors are just wooden gates—and gobble in the bedroom at dawn. The people in the street linger to look in and see how you're sleeping. The horse-riding lady from the circus has the next room, and stalks about with yards of bushy hair sticking out, rather fat inside a violent dressing-gown. The hotel, being a hollow square, is as public as the street.—But we are going on today to Mazatlan, the port. On the whole, the west coast is a little *too* wild—nothing but wildness, as Gótzsche says. One wants a bit of hopefulness. These wild lost places seem so hopeless.—But a man said he'd *give* me six or eight acres of land near Guaymas, near the sea, in a very wild, very strange & beautiful country, if I'd only build a house on the place. Queer country, with clouds of wild duck, and geese, & queer flocks of pelicans. But one feels so out of the world: like living on Mars. As if the human race wasn't real.—I don't know what effect it would have on one in the end.—G. is getting very red in the face with this fierce sun. He looks at these broken, lost, hopeless little towns in silent disgust. He speaks not one word of Spanish, & is altogether an onlooker.

I think from Mazatlan we shall take the steamer down to Manzanillo and from Manzanillo go to Guadalajara. I wish you would forward the letters there: C/o Dr. G. Purnell, Galeana #150, Guadalajara, Mexico, Jalisco.

We may be there in a week's time.

At Minas Nuevas we did nothing but drink beer & whisky cocktails. Los Angeles seems in another lifetime. I feel as if I should wander over the brink of existence.

Remember me to the Bóttens & send their address & I will write them a letter and return Mogens.¹ Also greetings to Mrs. Mott and Mr. Mott: I hope they are flourishing. Write to Guad. D. H. L.

If you see Johnson tell him I will write him. I ordered a book for him & Mrs. Johnson—hope they came.

Tell the Bee I hope she's busy laying up honey of wisdom. D. H. L.

P.S.—Once we are in Guadalajara, then the best way for F. to come will be by sea to Vera Cruz from N. York, or straight down by Laredo. This railway has 100-mile gap near Tepic—of which you must ride nine hours on horse. Otherwise you take the steamer for a day, & get round that way. The best way down from *Los Angeles*, once we are south of Tepic, is to take the steamer direct to Manzanillo, then it's only about eight hours in the train to Guadalajara.

When I look at the ranches, I doubt very much whether I shall ever try to live on one for ever and a day. But very nice to stay the winter.

We went to a big wild cattle hacienda—they are strange, desolate, brutal places: beautiful enough, but weird & brutal. I doubt if one could bear it: or if one *wants* to bear it.

I shall be glad to get some news. You write to Frieda, care Thomas Seltzer, 5 W. 50th St.—I don't know where she is. And send me the letters.

Hope things are going well with you. D. H. L."

At least Lawrence made no bones about his feelings. I shook my head. I was really sorry that it seemed that my prophecy should begin to come true so soon. Then this letter from Gótzsche:

"NAVAJOA,
October 4, 1923.

To KNUD MERRILD.

DEAR MERRILD—We have just come down from the Swiss' silver mine where we have been a couple of days.

¹ *Mogens*, a book by the Danish author, J. P. Jacobsen.

We have not yet found anything to suit us, so we are thinking of going down to Guadalajara. Here the west coast seems to be a little warmer than California, the same brush-covered foothills, but with small primitive villages; in some of them the houses are merely straw huts—just some stakes and straw mats. The natives are rather uninteresting, I think. We have made some trips inland, but have not been molested by anyone.

There are many banana trees here, picturesque, I think, also figs and palms.

The hotels are very primitive, and to our way of thinking, very poor and bad. It is warm here, as in New York, but as soon as one gets up into the mountains, it is nice and cool. Tomorrow we go on again, and think to take the steamer from Mazatlan to Guadalajara. Greet acquaintances and be greeted from your affectionate friend.

KAI GÓTZSCHE."

Then the next day I had a fat letter from Lawrence. In it were several cards with birds on, the designs made of real feathers in brilliant colours and glued on, all nicely wrapped in tissue paper.

"MAZATLAN,
6 Oct.

To KNUD MERRILD.

DEAR MERRILD—Gótzsche says you won't want one of these birds—but why not? Though it's a swallow with no message.—Give the cards to their owners, will you: Mrs. Böttern, Mrs. Mott & Miss Rolf. I will write a proper letter to Harry Johnson, from Guadalajara.—Send me the letters there. We shall be more in the world: this is too much outside: like being shut out of the back door. And so hot!!—But it's rather like one of your beloved Pacific Islands, the view of the bay with all its cocoa-nut palms.—If we have luck, we shall be in Guadalajara by next Thursday—this is Sunday: a day and two nights at sea.—Wonder if you're bathing with the Bötterns today.

D. H. L.

Gótzsche says the birds are too sweet: but candy must be sweet: we can't always suck lemon."

And a week later, this message, also from Lawrence.

"Saturday, 13 October
TEPIC, NAYARIT.

To KNUD MERRILD.

We set off in the morning in a Lizzie over the mountains for Tuxtlan: on Monday horseback all day, to pick up the other end of the railway. We should be in Guadalajara on Tuesday, and I hope to find letters. It is cooler here—3000 ft. up—but still quite hot enough. G. wants to paint, but hasn't got any paper, and of course can't buy any.

Remember us to everybody.

D. H. L."

And the following week, this letter from Gótzsche, telling of their arrival in Guadalajara. Rather lengthy, but interesting, I think.

"GUADALAJARA,
October 15, 1923.

To KNUD MERRILD.

DEAR MERRILD—Today, at noon, we arrived in Guadalajara at last, and got our mail. Thanks for your letter and good luck with your new 'Overland.'¹ I do think it is very sensible to buy a car; when one is to live in the U.S.A., it is the only enjoyment one can have, and really not so expensive. You know what L. says, 'Why does he do that, you think?—Well I never!—How silly!!!'—But as said before, I think it is good sense and hope you may have lots of fun with it, and little or no trouble.

Have you been to the beach and bathed since we left U.S.?

Now you shall hear a little about our trip. You know we stopped at Guaymas and that it was awful hot and dirty, but interesting at the harbour; and that we next stopped at Navajoa and went to see the Swiss who has a silver mine in the mountains in a rather tiresome landscape of forest-covered mountains. The most interesting of that part of the country were the small primitive villages, if they can be called such, because there were only a few huts, built on four stakes, and palm leaves for

¹ I had sold our Lizzie and bought an Overland car instead, as I needed it to get to my working places.

roof, and straw mats hung up for walls—no furniture, no doors or windows, and only two stones and a piece of tin for the kitchen. It could hardly be any simpler. The children half-naked, the smaller ones absolutely naked, the women in ordinary cheap loud-coloured skirts, bare feet, loose hair, cigarette in mouth, dung-dirty. The men in enormous big straw hats, and enormous wide white slacks, white shirt and sandals, indeed very picturesque figures. The huts were spread here and there in the jungle or wilderness, no tilled soil. It looked absolutely barren and destitute.

Hour after hour, day after day, we journeyed through steppe-like sandy land with low brush. It was dry as an oven and as hot, flat as a pancake, with blue mountains in the eastern horizon. At the stations, there were only a few adobe huts, but desolate. It was impossible to understand why our train should make stops there, sometimes for hours at a time. When we had to transfer to another train, we always had to wait a day or two; but at last we reached Mazatlan, where it was more like a town, but unbearably hot, day and night, so we just loitered around to find just a small shady spot, preferably where there would be a small breeze, but it seemed very difficult to find. When we ate, I had continually to wipe my forehead to prevent my perspiration from dripping into my soup. I hated to be there. Otherwise, it was very interesting, with all kinds of tropical fruits: cocoa-palms, bananas, pineapples, dates, etc. We drank coco-milk from the coconut right on the street. We did nothing, however, but wait for the next day to come. We did, of course, see those people to whom L. had letters of introduction. We dined and made excursions into the country from the different towns.

Next was Tepic, at 3000 feet altitude, so we could breathe again; what a relief. The town was picturesque, but dead and lonesome. From Tepic we went by Ford car to Istlan. You would say it was a lie if I showed you the road. You would not believe it possible to drive a Ford across that road, and ninety kilometres of it. Six men in the car, numerous suitcases on the running board, even on the front fenders they were piled up, completely covering the motor housing. We had to hold

on to seat and roof with our hands all the way, and had terrific headaches. We passed by some very interesting large haciendas, whole villages they were, in beautiful surroundings. As we came into a small town, a bull fight was to be staged, so we stopped to take that in as well. Interesting, but how raw it was. I felt sick to my stomach, qualmish, perhaps from shaking about in the Lizzie, or the sight of the blood, or both, I don't know. But how loathsome. We saw four bulls, of which two were killed. There were no horses, I am glad to say. They killed the bulls by sticking a long, slender sabre between the shoulder blades. It was disgusting to see. The poor animal was gasping for air, its tongue hanging from its throat, and blood streaming from its nose. And for each time the bull took a breath, a small spout of warm, red streaming blood went into the air from the open wound in the shoulder. A coagulated red river of blood oozed down the bull's side. The poor animal—he tried to lie down to die. But he was constantly aroused to make hopeless attacks at a red rag. How I wished the bull could give the picador a well-aimed push. And *that* young girls with their parents, and even small children, were watching! It was swell to see the bulls come in, head and tail high, dashing animals; they would fret and fume and stamp the ground and look for the enemy. I get provoked and furious just to think of the yellow and dumb performance.

The next day, we continued our journey on muleback. We started at seven in the morning, with guide and pack-mule for our luggage, and a Mexican passenger, a small caravan. We had nine hours on muleback, so our behinds and knees were plenty sore when we arrived at Istlan. I was not as tired, though, as I had thought I would be. It was a wonderful landscape and a new experience, after the slow trains. I had had enough, though, and was ready for a good bed, but unluckily there was no train from Istlan; the rains had washed the railroad tracks away, and there was no hotel at the station, so we slept in a shack belonging to some cranky Americans. We borrowed a couple of army cots—I had my blankets along. But our travelling partner and another old Mexican, covered in year-old scurf of dirt, sneaked in

and placed themselves on the floor, and rolled themselves in their serapes, coughing, spitting and snoring all night.

Early next morning, at 5.30, we had to get on again, new mules, new guide, but no new seat or knees. Without breakfast, we had six hours on muleback to the next station, Estlatlan, where there was a hotel, and today a train. And now we are all right; it is nice to be in a city again, with real people, tram cars, rest and food—it is not at all too hot, just right for me.

Mrs. Lawrence wants D. H. to come to England, but he will not, at least not this winter, he says. So now I don't know how it will be.

It sounds swell: Ufer to exhibit at the Rome International, and he is on the jury at the Academy in N.Y.—And his mural commission, how do you think his 'mural paintings' will be? I will try to get L.'s portrait in at the Academy. I hope to get something painted here; there is much of interest to paint.

How sad about Mrs. Mott's mother, who died. I can imagine little Mrs. is grief-stricken. Do you see any of Wibolt? Glad to hear Bótt's sold 'The Dolls.' Did they get a good price? Greet all in town and be greeted.

KAI GÓTZSCHE."

No wonder Lawrence wrote in his former letter, "I feel as if I should wander over the brink of existence." The strenuous ride on muleback without proper sleep, without food and in the unbearable heat. That takes stamina in the first degree, and I am sure he overtaxed his delicate body. He hated will power, but he had plenty of that himself, and that is what carried him through. I can only too well picture him and his mood. He was in terrible bodily, as well as mental, agony. He longed for Frieda. The whole situation was almost unbearable for him—and for Gótzsche, too. In a way, I am glad I spared myself, but I will let Gótzsche speak in his next letter:

"GUADALAJARA,
October 22, 1923.

TO KNUD MERRILD.

DEAR MERRILD—Yesterday we were at Japala; we went in the morning with Dr. Purnell and daughter, in a Ford

bus. We sailed to a small place of his that he let us have. It is beautiful, with mountains all around the lake; the small villages and the costumes of the people are picturesque. But I don't believe the place is adaptable to farming; it is too rocky. And to live there and just paint would be too lonesome. One must have something besides painting to do in a place like this; it is too desolate.

I cannot help being amused about L. You know he always scorns sentimentality, and likes to appear so rational, which he isn't at all. Why, even before we got out here, he said he didn't like to go to Japala without Frieda (he is longing for her), and when we were out there, he was deeply moved, he thought it had changed so much. 'Somehow it becomes unreal to me now. I don't know why,' he said. He is always so concerned about the 'spirit' of the place that he isn't aware, I believe, that it is he, himself, his own mood or frame of mind, that determines his impressions of the moment, or the landscape. It is, of course, possible that the place has changed, it is fall now and he was there with Frieda in the spring. But of course that isn't it. It is the 'spirit.'

'The life has changed somehow, has gone dead, you know, I feel I shan't live my life here.' And so on. His eyes were glossy, to the point of tears, with emotional agitation. He had willed himself into belief that this was the place he loved, and the place to live. He is much more sentimental than he will admit. And then he is offended and cross because Frieda is happy to be in England. She writes it is the best country in the world, and wants him to come, etc. Deepest inside himself he is proud of England and if it wasn't for his author ideas, he would go back at once. But he wants to start that 'new life' away from money, lust and greediness, back to nature and seriousness. He maintains that people like Johnsons only play life away. I am afraid that that applies to himself, everything becomes play to him, he has means enough not to take anything really seriously. Now I don't know at all what it is going to be. He talks about how difficult it would be to have a farm here, to which, unfortunately, I can only agree. (We saw a small farm at Mazatlan, but it was so hot

that it would be unbearable to live there. Otherwise, it was as it should be.) Here it seems impossible to me. He says that in England it would be easy for him to get a small farm and run it. But I contend that if we can't find a farm here, there is nothing for me to do but go back to the U.S.A. and start in where I left off. He will, I think, want me to come along to England, but there is not very much sense in that. So you see, even the plan is already beginning to disintegrate. But that of course is good, better that than to have started farming just to give it up. It is too bad, for it would be fun to paint here, of that I am sure.

It is therefore possible that I will soon be back in the U.S.A., but I know nothing yet. It is evident to me that, inside, he is fighting himself, what to do, because as an author, he likes best to stay here and build a new colony in this country, a new simple, ideal life, but as man he likes to go back to England and culture. I rather realize that if I leave him now and go back to America, he will continue to ramble about in the world, without peace. He needs, in a high degree, something else to think about, and something else to do besides his writings. I am absolutely sure that he would feel happier and live more happily if he could go out for a few hours a day, and have some work to do, milk a cow or plow a field. As he lives now, he only writes a little in the morning and the rest of the day he just hangs around on a bench or drifts over to the market place, hands in pocket, perhaps buying some candy, fruit, or something. If he could only have access to a kitchen, so he could make our food, that would occupy him for a couple of hours. I don't mind going to England, but I hate to be absolutely dependent on him, which inevitably would be the case.

It seems almost impossible to find a good solution. How goes it in Los Angeles? Greet Bóttts and Motts and be greeted yourself from your friend. K. G. G."

Three days later, Gótzsche wrote me again. He needed someone to talk to, as he now was avoiding the company of Lawrence, whom he at times considered insane. The letter is rather lengthy, so I will quote it in part only and give a résumé of the rest.

that it would be unbearable to live there. Otherwise, it was as it should be.) Here it seems impossible to me. He says that in England it would be easy for him to get a small farm and run it. But I contend that if we can't find a farm here, there is nothing for me to do but go back to the U.S.A. and start in where I left off. He will, I think, want me to come along to England, but there is not very much sense in that. So you see, even the plan is already beginning to disintegrate. But that of course is good, better than to have started farming just to give it up. It is too bad, for it would be fun to paint here, of that I am sure.

It is therefore possible that I will soon be back in the U.S.A., but I know nothing yet. It is evident to me that, inside, he is fighting himself, what to do, because as an author, he likes best to stay here and build a new colony in this country, a new simple, ideal life, but as man he likes to go back to England and culture. I rather realize that if I leave him now and go back to America, he will continue to ramble about in the world, without peace. He needs, in a high degree, something else to think about, and something else to do besides his writings. I am absolutely sure that he would feel happier and live more happily if he could go out for a few hours a day, and have some work to do, milk a cow or plow a field. As he lives now, he only writes a little in the morning and the rest of the day he just hangs around on a bench or drifts over to the market place, hands in pocket, perhaps buying some candy, fruit, or something. If he could only have access to a kitchen, so he could make our food, that would occupy him for a couple of hours. I don't mind going to England, but I hate to be absolutely dependent on him, which inevitably would be the case.

It seems almost impossible to find a good solution. How goes it in Los Angeles? Greet Bóttis and Motts and be greeted yourself from your friend. K. G. G."

Three days later, Gótzsche wrote me again. He needed someone to talk to, as he now was avoiding the company of Lawrence, whom he at times considered insane. The letter is rather lengthy, so I will quote it in part only and give a résumé of the rest.

"GUADALAJARA,
JAL., MEX.,
October 25, 1923.

TO KNUD MERRILD.

DEAR MERRILD—Have you received my last letter? I enclosed some American stamps I found in my grip. The heat in Mazatlan glued them together, but you can separate them in water and then use them on your letters. We are still in Guadalajara, it seems like Lawrence is too slothful to move away. I would like to go to Japala as it is easier to paint on the streets there, and get people to pose, than here where it is so over-crowded with people and too much traffic."

He then goes on to tell about the beautiful old buildings, life in the streets and plazas. Even though he likes the crowd and the life, he has, in a way, the feeling that he is wading in dirt, filth and vermin. He has tried to paint, but can find no room for his easel anywhere, the crowds are too dense, he can hardly find room to sit down and make a water-colour. In a smaller town, he could paint in the streets, but not there. And then he goes on to say:

"Today when I tried to paint, a dashing and very picturesque Gypsy woman came up to me and told my fortune. Lawrence insists that the clothes they wear are the real genuine Mexican costumes, etc. He hasn't the remotest idea about it, because today I asked her, and she said she was Polish-Hungarian, in reality a Gypsy. There is a whole colony of them here; they are everywhere. The Mexicans will have nothing to do with them. Today my fortune teller repeatedly chased the boys away. She gave me a root to eat with sugar and salt, saying then I would be very happy."

Then he describes her looks, her dress and her picturesqueness. And he tells of a band of Indians that came to town from the far-away mountains. He says:

"We saw Indians in Taos and elsewhere, but these Indians seemed to be very close to the pristine race."

He then describes them, their looks, clothes, colour, bow

and arrows, etc. They were rare strangers in town, and attracted everybody's attention.

"I got so excited, they struck me as prehistoric, or like wild animals in the street."

Then he relates unbelievable stories of killings and murders, and at present the papers are mad about a killing in the street; the known murderer goes about unmolested and police are doing nothing about it. Then he says:

"In spite of all, I would like very much to be here and paint, at least until February. I wish I could live by painting, and only once in a while go to U.S.A. or Europe to exhibit and sell my paintings, and live in culture for a few months. To have a ranch here will not mature, I can see that now. And I can feel that Lawrence is working himself up to *will* to go to England. I believe Frieda has influenced his friends in England, because they all write that he must come back and that England is beginning to be the leading country in culture again. 'If I go, I shan't stay long, I know,' he says. Well! That means he is thinking strongly about departure.

Frieda doesn't write, she is probably insulted because he is here. He is cross at her and irritable, and I am sure, if he could let steam off, he would be like he was the first time at Del Monte.

Poor Miss Purnell, who is poetry-mad and talks verse with L. when we are there, gets some very hard thumps from him. I am avoiding L. as much as possible at present, because, considering all things, he is really insane when he is as now. It is too bad, and I miss someone with whom to talk and have a little fun. You know his ways, and how he bends his head far down, till his beard is resting on his chest and he says (not laughing) 'Hee, hee, hee' every time one talks to him. A cold stream always runs down my spine when he does that. I feel it is something insane about him. I am, considering everything, really glad that we have not been able to find a ranch here, because I realize it would be too difficult to live with a man like L. in the long run. Frieda is at least an absolute necessity as a quencher. I have sometimes the feeling that he is afraid she will run away from him now, and he cannot bear to be alone.

I am afraid the end will be that I shall soon come back to U.S.A. I hate the thought of going to work again, smearing and daubing, *fy for Satan!*

Keep me a'jour with conditions. I wonder sometimes if it wouldn't be wiser to go from here to N.Y. again—one makes more and is closer to home. But I hate to go back to our old firm. Oh, how I wish I could stay here and artist-paint. I am sure one could if one had money enough, or courage to keep it up. Greet Bóttis, Motts and be greeted yourself.—Yours affectionately,

K. GÓTZSCHE.

P.S.—Hanson asks for your address.”

Poor Gótzsche, he was having a hell of a time. Three days later, he wrote me again.

“28 October, 1923,
GUADALAJARA,
JAL., MEX.

TO KNUD MERRILD.

DEAR MERRILD—Today we went to St. Pedro on the tram car, a few miles from Guadalajara, where they make pottery. We bought some small things and shipped them to you.”

Lawrence goes into detail about this in his following letter, so I will leave Gótzsche's description out. He asks me to distribute the things as gifts to his friends here.

“You take what you like best. Perhaps I should keep them until Christmas and then give them as Christmas gifts. I will hardly be able to afford anything at Christmas, as I have had to bite on the bit for months here. I think it is the wisest if I don't come home to L. A. Then at Christmas you can distribute my gifts. I hope they arrive whole in L. A.

Lawrence has now decided to go to England in the middle of December, so I presume I shall be coming back to L. A. at that time, if I can't keep it up here any longer. I would so like to stay, at least until spring, but it is doubtful if I can. The worst of it is that I shall risk coming to L. A. at a time when there is no work to be had, and I will absolutely be on my arse at that time.

Lawrence is more human again. At present, he excuses himself on the ground that the air is so changeable that it makes him 'crazy' once in a while. A poor excuse!

It upsets me to think how cheaply one could live here, but even so it would be impossible for me to stay. To think that one really has to go back to L. A.—to that dung-work there. I will not go to the studios again. Let me know how it is with your firm, or any other firm in town. Write soon and greet everybody.—Yours affectionately,
K. G. G."

In a way I regretted that I hadn't gone along. I felt sorry for them. They were not having a good time and were not altogether happy. I thought that perhaps in some way I could have been of help.

I was not having too good a time myself in Los Angeles. Having saved a little money, I had quit my job again to be free to paint my pictures. I knew that being tied down, in overalls to a job, would get me nowhere, artistically or in life.

I had joined an artists' group here and exhibited with them. Two newspapers reproduced one of my paintings (the one Lawrence wanted to help me paint at the ranch). I sent him the clippings. In Lawrence's next letter, he refers to a hole in my pants, and my setting myself on fire, so I will explain briefly. I had written him that I was standing in my room one day, deeply occupied in analysing the picture I was painting. Thoughtlessly, one of my hands was fumbling with a large bunch of loose matches in my back pocket. The matches ignited and set fire to my pants and underwear, burning my hand and my behind. You might laugh, but it was no fun being on fire and jumping around among easel, chairs and paint pots. But never mind, here is Lawrence's letter:

"HOTEL GARCIA,
GUADALAJARA, JAL.,
3 November, 1923.

DEAR MERRILD—Your letter yesterday—and what a tale to tell: setting yourself on fire, quitting your job, and

altogether being irresponsible. Get someone to insure you against yourself.

The new Lizzie—but she's not a Lizzie, I suppose her name is Florodora—sounds very grand. I see you, a gentleman of leisure with a large hole burnt in your pants, driving majestically out on to Grand Avenue. For heaven's sake go gently.

The little picture looked quite smart in print. I hope your next shot at Fame and Fortune will bring down both birds. Gotzsche is busily covering canvas with people in hats.

I managed to get off the Plaquepaque pots—the Vases for G.'s various friends (also mine)—by express yesterday. The express I was only able to pay to Ciudad Juarez (the El Paso border). The agents are supposed to ship them over the frontier & on to you by express—this part you must pay on delivery, but it can't be much: just one box, not at all heavy. The agents are Angeles y Velarde, Agentes Aduanales, *Ciudad Juarez Chihuahua*. If the box doesn't come, you might write & ask them. I sent Mrs. Seltzer a vase in a basket by the same shipment—for New York.

Gótsche will have told you that Frieda won't come back: not West any more. I had a cable yesterday asking me to go to England. So there's nothing for it but to go. And G. will try and get a cheap ship to Denmark, to look at home once more. It seems to be the only thing he really wants to do.—So I think we shall go on to Mexico City next week—this is Saturday—and look for a ship.

These are great fiesta days here, very gay & full of peons and the streets full of stalls & vendors, mostly of toys. The midday is hot still—but evening cool. I think Guadalajara is pleasant. In a way I am sorry to be going. But now it seems inevitable that I must go back to England, and square up with that once more.

Remember me to the Bóttens: hope they are beginning to build their house. They must call it Puppenheim, after the famous dolls that started their fortune. Greet also the Motts—and the Johnsons. I wrote them a letter.—I hope Miss Rolfe¹ got her little bird too.—Yours,

D. H. LAWRENCE."

¹ Mrs. Johnson's sister, Beatrice.

After this letter from Lawrence, I think it interesting to make comparisons with the following from Gótzsche. They are quite contradictory, but that is how it was.

"10 November, 1923.

To KNUD MERRILD.

DEAR MERRILD—Thanks for the letter, day before yesterday. I note that you work again, but you don't mention for whom, so I reckon it is the old firm again. I am glad you are satisfied with your 'Overland.' That was perhaps what we should have bought when we started on our trip across U.S.A. or perhaps we had to ruin a car before we knew how to handle it properly. I imagine it must be a pleasure to drive it after all the fuss and trouble we had with that tin can of ours."

Then he asks some questions that have no bearing here—about friends, etc., and he continues:

"We are, as you can see, still in Guadalajara, but we are both a little tired of being here. The town is all right, but it is no good to live in a hotel and never be really 'at home.' The last couple of weeks, Lawrence has been himself again. The other day, he asked me if I wouldn't rather go with him—we could take a freighter to Europe before Christmas and he would pay my fare. He will not go alone in a freighter. Then I could save my money to go back to N.Y.

It was difficult to refuse a trip home, so I said all right, let us see first if we can find a boat. So now we are awaiting an answer from Vera Cruz about a ship. It is rather odd trying to get used to the idea of being home this winter. Then I think I shall go back to N.Y. in the spring. I figure that if I went to N.Y. now, I would be without work a couple of months anyway, so I am losing nothing by going home.

The longer I am here, the more I would like to stay and have a ranch in this country. Life is so picturesque—on the street and in the country—and nature is beautiful, something like New Mexico."

Then he writes a page about the beauty of the country and of the people, and continues:

"As a rule they are friendly and polite, even if many of them look like real bandits. When we are outside the town, both of us get a burning desire to stay in this country. Life could really be interesting, if one could get settled to one's liking.

Lawrence is a queer snail, and impossible to understand. He seems to be absolutely nuts at times, and to have a hard time with himself. He over-estimates himself. He thinks he can show by his feelings what people think and do. At other times he is so reasonable and so overwhelmingly good that there is no end to it. He talks often about you and wonders what you are doing, and what you think and what you *will* do and think. You will never get away from U.S.A. He makes everything much more artificial and complicated than it is in reality. He is afraid Frieda will avoid him; he says that she can have a house in London and have her children with her, then he can travel alone. 'She will hate it before long,' he says, biting his lower lip and nodding small, quick nods. Do you know him? The fact is that he is afraid she will like that arrangement only too well. Nevertheless, he has a large heart and means well, but his ideas are so impractical that it is doubtful he will get anyone to accept them.

Well, greet the Bóttts and the Motts many times and be greeted yourself from yours affectionately,

K. GÓTZSCHE."

I was really very sad about it, and I was not at all proud that my prophecy should so soon be fulfilled.

If there is a tug-of-war between a married couple, that is enough to throw anyone off balance. And since Lawrence felt so much more intensely than most people, it can readily be seen that his frame of mind was an understandable one, and it fully explains his behaviour and, to a certain degree, excuses it. Even in normal circumstances, he could be hysterical, and I can easily understand that in his present condition he could at times appear insane. I considered Lawrence a sick man in his present state. He was bodily, emotionally and mentally overworked, and this had its reaction, not only on himself but to a certain extent on

Gótzsche, as well. Gótzsche, in a way, was more related generally to Lawrence in his make-up than I. He, like Lawrence, relied considerably on his emotions, whereas I relied on my mind. Lawrence said so to me one day and accused me of living too much in my head. "You must live from your belly," he had said. Lawrence and I were really at opposite poles: he hot and I cool, and Gótzsche in between. But then Lawrence was so many things that made relationships possible and he could, when balanced, focus himself to that relationship. When balanced, he was never bored or irritable, his interest was so vividly alive.

Mentally or emotionally we are apt to judge people by their weak points, but we rarely judge a man bodily for his strength when he is momentarily ill or diseased. So let us not judge Lawrence from his attacks of hysterical outbursts or when he was off balance physically or psychologically, but rather when he was composed and stable, and we will find him the good shepherd and great giant that he really was.

Then I had a postcard from Lawrence and a letter from Gótzsche.

"MEXICO, D.F.,
19 Nov.

To KNUD MERRILD.

We sail on the Toledo Hamburg-American boat from Vera Cruz—I to England, G. to Hamburg. I am due in England about December 12th. Send me any letter, & write to me care S. Koteliensky, 5 Acacia Rd., London, N.W.8.

I shall see you again one day, am sure of that.—
Wiederssehen, D. H. L."

From Gótzsche:

"18 November, 1923.

To KNUD MERRILD.

DEAR MERRILD—Now we are on our way to Denmark. That means we are in Mexico City, waiting for a ship to Europe. We almost sailed yesterday, but we couldn't get our passports in order so quickly, so we gave it up.

Now we will have to wait until the 29th, that is, if we can't find another boat before then.

Lawrence was impossible the last days in Guadalajara, although rather nice. But one day he came and said he could not go to England. 'I am sure I will *die* if I have to see England again.'

All right, we decided then to stay and look for a farm, so we went out to see people and ask for information as to where we could find a farm to live on for the winter. He looked really sick and so pale, and his head hung way down on his chest. Next morning he came in to me and said: 'It is just as well to go to Europe, don't you think? One might just as well, I feel I don't care any more. I just go.' All right, then we'll go, and Friday we drove off from Guadalajara.

It is biting cold here in Mexico City; we are using our overcoats. It is rather like a big city, so I haven't got the feeling of being in Mexico now. And not at all yesterday when we had to put on our best clothes to go to the home of the English Consul for dinner. Lots of wine and good food; otherwise it was nothing for me. The Consul is single and he has a large rich home with loads of Indian and Mexican antiques. He paints himself, so he asked me if I wouldn't like to come out today and paint a young Mexican girl he had for a model. He has a large room which he uses as a studio. It might be rather fun. He is a nice man. I am to be there for lunch. He paints rather like the Taos painters, not quite as clever.

I had a letter from . . . the other day. I had asked him about conditions for work in N.Y. this winter. He writes that he asked our old boss, who said he could say nothing till he saw Gótzsche. Aha! That means that he wants to give me a sermon. The Devil take that idiot. I will not think of him for some time—now I will only delight in the thought of going home for Christmas.

I won't stay long in Denmark—I think, a couple of months, then I am coming back to U.S.A.

I think you can return my letters to Gentofte Bregnevej 5, as I will not be able to get them here.

How goes it in Los Angeles? Hope you keep working and get going via China soon. Greet the friends and be greeted yourself.

KAI GÓTZSCHE."

Then a postcard from each of them from Havana; here is Lawrence's:

"HAVANA,
25 Nov.

To KNUD MERRILD.

Two days here—am already sick of ship—mixed German Spanish Danish English—a nearly empty boat. G. at last happy.
D. H. L."

Lawrence had been bullied to return: his will, spirit and desires were licked momentarily and he was not much of a bulldog when he finally left. "It is just as well to go to Europe, don't you think? One might just as well, I feel I don't care any more. I just go." I deplore that picture of him, but back in England he could snarl again and muster up enough strength for a new departure with Frieda. He was deeply dissatisfied. He wrote me from London.

"It feels so heavy, so dead, with no answer in it. I feel I don't belong any more. I'd much rather be in Taos; even in Los Angeles." And when he was in Taos, and when here, he condemned it and wanted to go somewhere else. Always somewhere else. "Somewhere." I couldn't quite understand that restlessness and indecision. He was so purposeful and planned his daily duties around his house with precision and accuracy—but when it came to life itself, he did not plan, he did not control; it seemed he didn't even try. His wishes and likes were blown around in the wind of his feelings, not knowing when or where the wind blew. It seemed to me that he was aimlessly fluttering around in the world, like a moth trying to escape into the artificial light of its desires, enclosed by a shining globe, only to burn its wings of hope on the bright tube. And so Lawrence, despite his denials, was flying his life on the wings of feelings, fluttering against his tube of ideas, the sparkling glass that encloses the bright light of Utopia. Now man is not a moth, man has not feelings alone but mind as well, and I, for one, cannot let my life drift along on feelings, least of all on somebody else's. I want to shape

my own destiny, to steer my own course in the wind of feelings, controlled by the rudder of mind.

Despite the great respect, affection and admiration I had for Lawrence, I felt I could not link up my life with his again; it was too hopeless, too uncertain.

But here is his letter from London:

“110 HEATH ST.,
HAMPSTEAD,
LONDON, N.W.3,
20 Decem., 1923.

To KNUD MERRILD.

DEAR MERRILD—Well, I’ve been here a week: don’t like it a bit. It feels so heavy, so dead, with no answer in it. I feel I don’t belong any more. I’d much rather be in Taos: even in Los Angeles.

I think very soon—by the New Year probably—we shall go to Paris—and then to Spain—And by March I hope to be coming West again. If Mexico is still revolting, we may stay a time in New Mexico. I told you Mabel Sterne and I made friends again: but a different friendship from before, I assure you.—Murry & another friend wants to come along, to make a home of a sort away in Mexico if possible. We’ll see. I’ll let you know when we move—our old plans of having a ranch may still mature.

I’ve not yet heard from Gotzsche—it is nine days since I left him on the ship in Plymouth. I wonder if Denmark depresses him as much as England does me.

Don’t come to Europe—unless for a ‘flying’ visit. One doesn’t belong any more.

There is snow—not much.

Save a bit of money to be free to go *somewhere* in the spring.

F. sends warm greetings, & we talk about last Christmas—before Archipenko was sculpted—the frozen chickens hanging in the shed. Nice to remember.

Au revoir,

D. H. LAWRENCE.”

Well, I thought Mabel had been forgotten, but evidently she wasn’t. He had told me they made friends again, but I don’t remember that now. I must have lost that letter.

But anyway, he knew I wouldn't approve of it, so he had to emphasize: ". . . but a different friendship from before, I assure you." How could I dare believe in that assurance, after all that had been said and done! I didn't know how I should take it. Perhaps I got disgusted and said, "to hell with both of them." But my mind contradicted that and suggested, "perhaps it is an act of greatness: is there anything greater than to forgive your enemy, and not only that, but bestow a new friendship as well?"

I have never hated Mabel, nor have I ever had any use for her. I have reported many things about her, favourable and unfavourable, but that is only as it was. But now my sense of fairness, and obligation to truth, bids me also record the making up of the new friendship—a different kind, whether I approve of it or not or how ridiculous it seemed to me.

Somehow Mabel had found out that Lawrence was alone in Mexico, in company with one of those Danes, as she has expressed herself. She wrote to Lawrence and told him that she had to have his friendship. Lawrence answered her and I will quote, from his first and second letters,¹ the parts which relate to the reconciliation:

"HOTEL GARCIA,
GUADALAJARA, JAL.,
19 October, 1923.

DEAR MABEL—I got your letter here today—when I arrived from Tepic. Yes, I was pretty angry. But now let us forget it. At least I will forget, forget the bad part. Because also I have some beautiful memories of Taos. That, perhaps, is what makes the sting burn longer.—As for reviling you, when I am angry, I say what I feel. I hope you do the same. When John Evans went round saying, 'Mother had to ask the Lawrences to get out,' then I felt there was nothing to do but to throw the knife back. But now, enough. If it's *got* to be a battle of wills, I'll fight the devil himself, as long as the necessity lasts. But it's not my idea of life.

¹ "Lorenzo in Taos," published by Alfred A. Knopf.

There, there's an end to the enmity, anyhow.

People tell me you are divorcing Tony, and there is another young man, and so on. Probably it is not true. I hope it's not. I don't think it is. Tony always has my respect and affection. . . .Yrs.,

D. H. LAWRENCE."

"HOTEL GARCIA,
GUADALAJARA, JAL.,
8 November, 1923.

DEAR MABEL—I had your letter from California yesterday. Don't trouble any more. Let the past die and be forgotten. . . .

One day I will come to you and take your submission: when you are ready. Life made you what you are: I understood so much when I was in Buffalo and saw your mother. But life put into you also the germ of something which still you are not, and which you *cannot* be, of yourself, and if you go on in the same way. People, lawyers, politics, enemies, back-biters, friends and pseudo friends: my dear, it is all chimaera and nothing. I will take a submission from you one day, since it is still yours to give. But apparently not yet.—I was your enemy. But even saying things against you—and I only said, with emphasis and in many ways, that your will was evil masquerading as good, and I should still say that of your will: even as an enemy I never really forsook you. There, perhaps I have said too much. But don't think, even so, you can make a fool of me.

D. H. L."

After all the animosity between the two in Taos, it was only natural that I should ask myself, "Why did he make up?" I say he, because I was not considering her. She was too crazy for Lawrence—to ask why—anything could be expected from her. But Lawrence, why? I found, with the information at hand, that, more than anything else, it should be ascribed to the act of circumstances.

When Mabel learned that Lawrence was *alone* in Mexico, without his wife and guardian angel Frieda, she knew he was vulnerable and she wrote him at once.

letter didn't come off. But answer or no answer, he wrote me again, this time a postcard from Paris.

"PARIS,
January 24.

TO KNUD MERRILD.

Came here yesterday—am terribly sick of the dark dreary winter of this Europe—but Paris better than London—much best stay in California. I think we shall be back in New York by March—then probably to New Mexico. F. sends greetings. D. H. LAWRENCE."

And a few days later, this letter from Gótzsche. I had had previous letters from him describing the voyage and return to Europe with Lawrence. I can't find them, so I have probably lost them.

"COPENHAGEN,
February 4, 1924.

DEAR MERRILD—Thanks for your letter today with woodcut number two. I like it, it looks as though woodcut is a material or technique suited for you.

I am glad you are still working. Hope you will keep going all year. You are not yet happy about L.A. nor U.S.A., I feel, but at least be glad for the warm days you have there. You would hate the raw cold weather at home, and lack of sun. But otherwise, I must confess I am happy here, and would like to stay. I don't long to go West, to be American, but soon I will probably be going, perhaps about March first. It is, of course, no paradise here; there are things I don't like, but people really are much more cordial, friendly and understanding here than in the U.S. I at least have met some wonderful civilities and much friendliness, but I must also say we were lucky to meet nice people in the States, too.

I have had several cards and notes from Lawrence, last from Paris, where he writes that he and Frieda are going to Baden-Baden and from there to U.S.A., where he thinks we can meet in March. He has lauded Taos several times, but likes best to go to Mexico again. I think he ought to feel a little ashamed of the way he changes from hate to love about the different places where he has been. He sure has very little control over

his ideas, extraordinarily little—he doesn't even in the least know what he wants. You should have seen him in Mexico; he knew he would die if he saw England again, he felt so sick, so sick."

Then a detailed account of what has been told before.

"And on the ship, he didn't like it at all. He hated the Atlantic Ocean. 'It seems dead somehow.' Baloney! I say. 'The Pacific was much better.' Before he always said that the Pacific had 'no life to it.' But despite him, I must admit I would like a trip to Taos again and also to Mexico. But I doubt that I shall do it for I don't like to live at the expense of someone else. If I could afford it, and have my own little house, I should like to go back and paint there. But then, think of all the boring people one would have to associate with.

Yes, it was remarkable with his friendship to us. I don't understand it either. He is sincere in it, I believe; he needs it, needs us, but I am also sure that he doesn't praise us to the skies when he talks about us to others, in periods when he doesn't need us. He doesn't even restrain from exposing Frieda. But I don't believe it is out of meanness; he doesn't mean it, as he says, and at bottom he is goodness itself, and I do like him even if I could never feel about him in the way one feels about comradeship.

To think of it, the wild Walter Ufer, sitting at home, being sentimental! Isn't it curious with those big men-folks? It makes me want to spit—they lie so! It seems to me that we Danes are more frank. Ufer's letters to L. were so full of sweet adulation it was almost unendurable to read them. And these people must have the feeling of the unreal about themselves, and trust in us, that is surely what engaged them about us. I want, now more than ever, to get away from that world and live my own life on a small farm at home, and I hope with all my heart that some day it will be reality. I believe it can be done."

Then there are two pages about mutual friends, and he concludes:

"I wish you were in New York, when I soon return. Fy for Satan, to have to go to New York. No, Denmark

is best, that is, when you have overcome the troubles of making your daily bread, but that, by the way, is no fun in U.S.A. either.

It is too bad one can't scrape some money together in a hurry and then live as one wishes. Greet everybody and be greeted yourself from yours affectionately,

KAI GÓTZSCHE."

Evidently Gótzsche and I were feeling more or less the same. We both liked Lawrence very much and believed in him, but on the other hand, we had had about enough of a good thing—for the time being, at least.

"Save a bit of money to be free to go somewhere in the spring," he said in his last letter, and now from Paris, "Best stay in California." It was so bewildering—so much against my nature, this planlessness and uncertainty. Again, I started to write and answer him, but letter after letter was destroyed. That letter just wouldn't come off. Countless are the letters I wrote to him in my mind, but they never took form on paper, and as time went on, it became harder and harder for me, as I felt guilty now. But time went on and on, and by and by my conscience was subdued and I found peace and relief. I was happy just to have Lawrence at a distance, just to know I had him—"somewhere," and content to communicate with his thoughts and ideas through his books. I knew that whatever his experience, his life, ideas or thoughts, I would find them in his books. And best of all, I had the strong feeling and belief that whenever again I would stretch out my hand to him, he would be the redeemer and take my hand in a deep renewed friendship.

Letters between Gótzsche and me did not altogether cease, but as time went on, they became more infrequent. It is, I think, needless to say, however, that our friendship has endured to this day, and without being sentimental about it here, I will simply say that I have treasured that friendship very much and am very glad indeed to possess it still. The visible trinity of Lawrence and the Danes has begun to pass on, but the invisible friendship endures and continues, until death parts us one by one. Then we shall

again be united in oblivion, and some day we shall all reach Utopia, meet "Somewhere" on the isle of peace and live that "New Life" of D. H. Lawrence.

In closing—my memories of Lawrence pass in review; they are varied as Life—beautiful as a rose, a real one, with thorns and all. The rose has withered, but among the leaves in my book of friendship, the rose is secure. It will never lose its scent, the halo of Lawrence. I feel there is no real finish to this book—I could go on and on talking about Lawrence; new things continually pop up and come to light, and just now I happen to remember a letter he once wrote to Lady Ottoline Morrell. I would like to quote that, in part,^f as a last message from him.

"I have been reading Van Gogh—very sad. He couldn't get out of the trap, poor man, so he went mad. One can see it so plainly, what he wanted. He wanted that there should be a united impulse of all men in the fulfilment of one idea—as in Giotto's and Cimabue's time. But in this world there is as yet only chaos. So he struggled to add one more term to the disorderly accumulation of knowledge. But it was not living. It was submitting himself to a process of reduction, which sent him mad. To live, we must all unite, and bring all the knowledge into a coherent whole, we must all set to for the joining together of the multifarious parts, we must knit all words together into a great new utterance, we must cast all personalities into the melting pot, and give a new humanity its birth. Remember, it is not anything personal we want any more—any of us. It is not honour nor personal satisfaction, it is the incorporation in the great impulse whereby a great people shall come into being, a free race as well as a race of free individuals. The individual is now more free than the race. His race hurts him and cribs him in. No one man can create a new race. It needs all of us. So we must all unite for this purpose. It makes me quite glad to think how splendid it will be, when more and more of us fasten our hands on the chains, and pull, and pull, and break them apart.

"One must always destroy the old Moloch of greediness and love of property and love of power. But think what a

splendid world we shall have when each man shall seek joy and understanding rather than getting and having.

"Don't think that I am important. But this thing which is of all of us is so important and splendid that the skies shiver with delight when it is mentioned. And don't be sceptical. We are the young. And it is only the young who can know a great cause. . . .

"Please don't mind me when I am stupid or impertinent. It is all so difficult for us each one to be his intrinsic self, each one of us to be the angel of himself in a big cause. We are the animals of ourselves also, but that when we are single, not when we are together, holding hands for the big cause.

"I see Van Gogh so sadly. If he could only have set the angel of himself clear in relation to the animal of himself, clear and distinct but always truly related, in harmony and union, he need not have cut off his ear and gone mad. But he said, do you remember—about 'in the midst of an artistic life the yearning for the real life remains'—'*one offers no resistance, neither does one resign oneself*'—he means to the yearning to procreate oneself 'with other horses, also free.' This is why he went mad. He should either have resigned himself and lived his animal 'other horses'—and have seen *if his art would come out of that*—or he should have resisted, like Fra Angelico. But best of all, if he could have known a great humanity, where to live one's animal would be to create oneself, *in fact, be the artist creating a man in living fact* (not like Christ, as he wrongly said)—and where the art was the final expression of the created animal or man—not the be-all and being of man—but the end, the climax. And some men would end in artistic utterance, and some wouldn't. But each one would create the work of art, the living man, achieve that piece of supreme art, a man's life."

INDEX

- Adam, 98, 188 ; district, 291
 Adama, 98
 Admirable, 98
 Adulteress, 98
 Adultery, 98
 Adventure, thought, 188, 226
 Esculapius, 183
 Aesthetic, 228, 230, 231, 233
 Africa, 190, 216, 270
 Ajante, caves of, 214
 Alamosa, 240
 Albuquerque, 278
 Alexander, 159
 Almighty, the, 234
 Aloneness, 146
 Alpha, 98
 Altamira, caves of, 219
 America, 10, 98, 101 ; has no soul,
 111, 186, 251, 275, 308, 328
 American, 12, 16 ; awful cultured,
 28 ; society women, 43 ; habit,
 63 ; landscape, 112, 160 ; black
 blood, 172 ; on muck heaps, 184,
 186, 306, 319, 338
 American Eagle, the, 109
 Amiel, 63
 Angelico, Fra, 211, 360
 Angelo, Michael, 223, 228
 Apache, 13, 285
 Arabian, desert, 113
 Archipenko, 352, 355
 Aristotle, 240
 Arizona, 19, 256, 278, 285
 Arroyo Hondo, 148, 190
 Art, abstract, 219, 221, 224, 233
 Art, of painting, 13, 17, 18, 209-34
 Artist Co-operative Society, 231
 Atelier, tea-party in, 16
 Atlantic, 295, 357
 "Au jardin de mon pere," 190
 Australia, 11, 277, 295, 323
 Aztecs, 278

 Baca, Transito, 155
 Baden-Baden, 356
 Barstow (California), 286
 Bavaria, 275

 Beauty, and sex, 152, 153
 Berkshire, 275
 Berry, Mrs., 293
 Bibles, *also see* Pips, 108, 160-76, 266
 Bill, *see* Hawk, 131
 "Birds, Beasts and Flowers," 18, 96,
 98, 122, 123, 147, 161, 297, 295
 Blood, believe in, 142 ; destroyed by
 mind, 186 ; consciousness, 186,
 188
 "Blue Jay," the, 108, 160
 Bois, the, 15
 Bolshevism, 127, 128
 Böttner, Anna, Mrs., 335, 339
 Böttner, J. Winchell, 304, 321, 322,
 332, 334, 341, 344, 346, 348
 Brabazon, 211, 229
 Brancusi's, 219
 Brandes, Georg, 13
 Brangwyn, Frank, 211
 Braque, Georges, 220, 229, 230
 Brentwood, 309, 311, 312
 British Empire, 12, 13
 Broadway (L.A.), 291
 Bubastis, alias Bibles and Pips, 265
 Buddhism, 277
 Buffalo, 118, 183, 311, 354
 Bull fight, 338
 Bursum bill, 273
 Burton, Dr., 316
 Bynner, Witter, 147, 266, 293, 301

 Cabristo Creek, 246
 Cacophony, 134
 Cajon Pass (California), 286
 Calabria, 277
 Calamus, 92
 California, 19, 277, 286, 289, 292,
 316, 335, 354, 356, 358
 Cannibalism, 239
 Capital, 126, 127
 "Captain's Doll," 96, 97, 122, 123,
 293, 301, 309
 Carmel (California), 316
 Carpaccio, 211
 "Cask of Amantillado, the," 98
 Catholic, 120, 121, 248

Central Park, 15
 "Centre of polarity," 96
 Ceylon, 16, 277
 Cézanne, 218, 219, 270
 Challenge, 206
 Change, 253
 Chapala, 294, 298, 300, 303, 306
 Chianti, 264
 Chicago, 130, 159, 274, 312
 Chihuahua, 346
 China, Chinese, 219; Chinatown, 291; China, 295, 350
 Chirico, G. de, 217, 218
 Christ, 85, 86, 87, 104, 204, 238, 360
 Christian, 190; Christianity, 277, 326
 Christmas, dance, 113, 120, 121
 Cimabue, 359
 Ciudad Juarez, 346
 Clytemnestra, 179
 Collier, 273
 Colorado, 1, 67, 240, 242
 Comfort, Will Levington, 293, 294, 298, 321
 Comradeship, 92
 Confucius, 179
 Consciousness, 237
 Cooper, 98
 Copenhagen, 356
 Corona (total eclipse of the sun), 316
 "Count of Monte Cristo," 320
 Cozoacan, 265
 Criticism, never a science, 233
 Cubist, 270

 Dakota, 2
 Dana, 98
 Dance, L. dances, 43, 45; modern dance repugnant to L., 44; Christmas dance at Pueblo, 120, 121; at San Ildefonso, 144
 Dane, seafaring, 94, see a, 292
 Danes, the, 8, 14, 22, 36, 38, 45, 63, 85, 94, 95, 96, 104, 114, 115, 116, 126, 138, 144; in accident, 143 146; with the Danes we shall be seven, 145; and Bynner, 147; and Meta, 149-50, 191; shopping, 192; learn Spanish, 195; criticize Lawrence, 213; the son, 234; dead girl, 248; new life, 251; cabin, 254; stuck in sand, 279; marooned in desert, 280-285; those Danes, 353; trinity pass on, 358; we Danes, 357
 Danish—critic, 13; painters, 43; writers, 88; colony, 128; folk songs, 132; artists, 124, 144, 194; newspaper, 279; painters, 317

Darkness, 146; god in, 236
 David, 95
 "Death in Venice," 105
 "Death of Procris," 209, 211, 212, 240
 Death Valley, 241
 Del Monte Ranch, 66, 73, 124, 256, 306
 Democracy, 13, 127
 Denmark, 21, 132, 262, 346, 349, 350, 352, 357
 Department of Justice, 273
 Devil, 138, 177; devilish machine, 180
 Diabolical, 138
 Don Juan, 125
 d'Orge, Jeanne, 316
 Dresden, 252
 Duchamp, Marcel, 220
 Dufy, Raoul, 217
 Dunn, John, 298

 "Each of us has two selves," 141
 "Eagle in New Mexico," 110
 Eagle Nest Lake, 5, 271
 Eclipse of the sun, 315
 Economical, Lawrence was, 193
 Egypt, 190, 216, 219, 325
 Einstein, 227
 El Dorado, 178
 El Morro National Monument, 285
 El Palacio, 158
 El Paso, 260, 346
 Emperor, 127
 England, 82, 94, 275, 277, 293, 301, 306, 308, 328, 341, 343, 346, 349, 350, 351, 352
 English—drinking song, 31; poet, 43; Christmas carols, 124; writer, 177, 195; water-colour painters, 211; spring, 275
 Englishman, 9, 12, 159
 Estelitan, 339
 "Eternal triangle," 50
 Etna, 277
 Europe, 21, 28, 43; staleness of, 90, 127, 251, 262; mistakes of, 275; lovely, 275, 293, 294, 301, 303, 306, 308, 310, 343, 350, 351, 352, 356
 Evans, John, 68, 353
 Eve, 188

 Fascism, 225
 Fata Morgana, 126
 Figueroa, 291
 Filipino, 291
 Film Studios, 124, 126
 Flemings, 211

Flesh, wiser than intellect, 142 ; no fusion in, 185
 "Flight into Egypt," 211
 Florence, 275
 Flow, 62, 96, 127, 135, 151, 152
 Fontana Vecchia, 293
 Form—pure, significant, 224
 France, 225
 Francesca, Piero della, 215
 Franklin, Benjamin, 98, 161
 Freeman, Elizabeth, 292, 293, 311, 330
 Friendship, 26, 36, 91
 French, 211
 Freud, psycho-analysis, 152
 Frieda, *see also* Mrs. Lawrence, 34 ; talk with L., 39 ; discusses with L., 46-50 ; as cook, 82 ; washing, 83 ; scolds the Danes, 101, 122 ; play on pot lids, 134 ; L. disapproves of her cigarettes, 137-138 ; her children, 139 ; is deserted, 143 ; defends Merrild, 180 ; snoops in the pantry, 192 ; generous, 193 ; interrupts Spanish lesson, 195 ; calls L. undependable creature, 202 ; good to tell him a few things, 213 ; the Holy Ghost, 234 ; What about mother-love, 235 ; in motor-car accident, 243-46 ; disagrees on painting, 249, 299 ; sails for Europe, 310 ; longing for children, 311 ; L. on, a bird like himself, 314 ; L. restless without, 328, 331 ; L. doesn't know where she is, 334 ; wants L. to come to England, 339, 340 ; influences friends in England, 343 ; won't come back, 346, 351 ; not writing L., 354, 355 ; going to Baden-Baden, 356, 357
 Friesz, Othon, 217, 229
 Galloway, A. D., 246
 Gallup, 285
 Gaudeamus, Igitur, 25
 Gauguin, Paul, 11, 270, 323, 324, 326
 Generous, L. was, 192
 German, baroness, 43 ; nobility, 82
 Gerson's, 22, 68
 Geyser, 205
 Giorgione, 228
 Giotto, 212, 275, 359
 Girtin, 211
 God, 127, 146 ; demi, 190, 206 ; what is, 235 ; idea of perishable, 236
 Gogh, Vincent van, 218, 270, 359, 360

"Good King Quentin," 124
 Gossip, a writer's business to know, 38 ; gossip Blue Jay, 107
 Gótzsche, K. G., 3, 10, 76 ; cross with L., 80 ; letter from Ufer, 130 ; letter from Meta, 157-58 ; letter from Ufer, 159 ; annoyed at L., 173 ; shoots rabbit, 177, 182 ; description of, 203 ; letter from Ufer, 274 ; letter from L., 292 ; letter from Frieda, 293 ; anecdote, 296 ; letters to Merrild, 332, 334, 336, 339, 342, 344, 347, 349, 356
 Goya, 215
 Grand Avenue (Los Angeles), 319, 330, 346
 Grand Canyon, 43, 256 ; description of, 285
 Grant (New Mex.), 280
 Greco, El, 215
 Greek, 216, 277, 321
 Greenland, 128
 Gregory, Horace, 104 ; in apocalypse, 193
 Gringo, 12 ; the crazy, 32, 262
 Guadalajara, 266, 292, 293, 294, 333-336, 339, 342, 344-47, 350, 353
 Guaymas, 332, 333, 336
 Gypsy, Polish Hungarian, 342
 Hacienda, 2
 Hamburg, 349
 Hamlet, 142
 Hamsun, Knut, 88
 Händel, 132
 Hansen, Ejnar, 304
 Hanson, Carl, 344
 Harsenpfeffer, 178
 Harwood, Mrs., 115 ; letter from L., 116, 122
 Havana, 351
 Hawk, William, *see* Bill, 68, 118
 Hawthorne, 98
 Hearst, chain, 252 ; magazine, 293
 Hennings, Martin, 158
 Hermanos Disciplinantes, 268
 Hermanos Penitentes, Los, 268
 Hermaphrodite, 103, 208
 Higgins, Victor, 67
 High-brow, 12, 13
 Hollywood, 11, 124, 177 ; Bowl, 321
 Holy Ghost, 234, 235
 Homosexual, 92, 103, 207
 Honesty, 141
 Hooch, Pieter de, 211
 Hopi, 255
 Hot springs, 30, 33, 34, 35, 203, 209
 "House of the Seven Gables, The," 98

"How can one pick roses," 133
Hughes, Chief Justice, 200
"Hunchback of Nôtre Dame," 297
Huxley, Aldous, 89

Ibsen, 88

Ice age, 110

Ideals, 206

Ideas, 206

India, 214

Indian, 5, 12; big chief, 20, 21; war-chief, 22, 26; vibration, 27, 28; hieroglyphics, 33; sacred springs, 34; fiesta at studio, 40-43; a dying race, 42, 101; Red man died hating White man, 111; Red man diabolic, 112; Christmas dance, 119-21; in Meta's studio, 148; Ute or Piute people, 155; love white woman, 184; models, 261-64, 269; Bursum Bill, 273; Mexican, 342

Influenza, 101

Intellect, a bit and a brindle, 142

Intuition, 232

Isms, 209

Istlan, 337, 338

Italy, 264, 331; Italian, 211; painting, 213

Ito, 217

"It was a Saturday Eve," 133

I.W.W., 73

Jacobsen, J. P., 88

Jalisco, 292, 294, 300, 333, 342

Japala, 339, 340, 342

Japanese, 219, 291; Japan, 295

Jesus, L. on, 86, 87, 273

Jew, Jewish priests, 86, 87; Jews like Marx, 127

Johnson, Harry R., 309-13, 315, 319, 334, 335, 340, 346

Johnson, Olivia Mrs., 309, 334

Johnson, Spud, 265, 293, 301

Josselyns, 316

Joyce, James, 105, 230

Juarez, 273

Jutland, 133

Kaiser Bill, 262

Kandy, 277

"Kangaroo," 96, 97, 122, 123

Kansas City, Mo., 331

Karlsbad, Karlovy Vary, 33

Kill, killing is natural, 212; I could kill, L. said, 239

Kindliness, L., my kindliness makes me sometimes a bit false, 141

King, a, 127

Kinship, 232

Kirkegaard, 88

Knapp, 271-72; fish story

Knowing, is nothing, 220

Knowledge, 142, 188, 326

Koteliansky, S., 349

Labour, 127

Lagerlöf, Selma, 88

Laredo, 334

"Largo," Händel's, 132

Laurencin, 217, 218

Lawrence, D. H., description of, 10; on board ship, 11; superiority, 13; on travel, 15; dislikes our work, 17; just another name, 19; teaching us riding, 24; riding in the mountains, 25; on pueblo, 26, 27; why he came to Taos, 28; Mabel "stuck on," 29; on hot springs, 33, 34; on Mabel and her scarf, 36, 37; gossip, 38; quarrel with painter, 39; Indians going dead, 42; modern dance, 44; dances by himself, 45; on neighbouring, mankind, struggle with men, 46-50; wants to get away, 50-51; persuades us to stay with him and Frieda, 57-59; Lobo Ranch, 57-64; enraged at Mabel, 64-65; as woodsman, 74-76; he is thirty-six years, 77; on runaway horse, 78-79; as cook, 82; on Frieda washing, 83; adjusting ourselves to the elements, 84; had the "gift of interest," and description of, 85; on Jesus Christ, 86-87; description of, 88; self portrait, 89; on his mail, dull as dishwater, 90; don't care if I see my friends, 91; friendship, "men to be at peace with," 92; trust in, 93; relationship, 94; doesn't need us, 95; making design, 97-98; hiking, 99-100; make sage tea, 102; not homosexual, 104; I feel I should die, 111; mad at Mabel, 115; will not go to Christmas dance, 117; about Christmas dance, 121; Seltzer letter on, 124-26; on labour, 127; as musician and listener, 132-34; Frieda smoking, L. gets hysteric, 137-38; the self that lives in my body—I say of myself, the known me, 141-42; flees from Mabel, 143; going down the strange lanes of hell, 147; sex and

Lawrence, D. H.—*continued*

beauty, 151-53; Ufer on, 160; Bibles, 161-76; scolds Merrill for shooting rabbit, 177-82; on Red and White man, 184-85; dishwashing and intellect, 186; on marriage, 187-89; shopping, 191; teaching us Spanish, 195; playing chess, 197-200; description of, naked at hot springs, 203-209; not homosexual, 207; on making pictures, 209-18; L. on abstract art, 224; on abstract life, 225; on pictures and picturaries, 227-32; mother-love, 235; consciousness, 237; I am I, 238; I feel I could kill, 239; Mabel, 240; in car accident, 243-46; dead girl, 248; return painting, 249; as novelist—great change coming, 253; Au revoir to the Danes, 256; you can't save Indians, 273; horrible Europe—lovely Europe, 275; on New Mexico, 277-78; lecture in Los Angeles on, 305; wants men with honourable manhood, 306; want to keep myself alive, 308; felt like cruising the seas, 310; to be alone, 313; nothing so meaningless as meanings, 315; viewing total eclipse of the sun, 317; in dance-hall, 320; on Gauguin and South Sea Islands, 323-26; au revoir to Merrill, 227-28; leaves Los Angeles, 330; describes travel in Mexico, 333; Gótzsche on, L. longing for Frieda, 340; Gótzsche believes L. insane, 343; the air makes him crazy, 345; afraid Frieda will avoid him, 348; sure to die if sees England again, 350; goes back to England, 351; friends with Mabel again, 352; two letters to Mabel, 353-54; comment on, by Merrill, 355; Gótzsche on, 357; L. on Van Gogh, life and Christ, 359-60

Lawrence, letters to:

Mrs. Harwood, 116 (from Lorenzo in Taos)

Gótzsche and Merrill, 292, 294

Knud Merrill, 67, 68, 260, 264, 265, 274, 293, 298, 300, 304, 306, 307, 310, 311, 329, 330, 333, 335, 336, 345, 349, 351, 352, 356

Lady Ottoline Morrell, 359-60 (from the letters of Lawrence)

Mabel Sterne, 114, 115, 145, 273, 353, 354 (from Lorenzo in Taos)

Lawrence, quotations from his work:

"Aaron's Rod," 235

Assorted Articles, 85, 87, 151-53, 225, 227-31

"Au revoir U.S.A.," 256

"Birds, Beasts and Flowers," 92, 106-07, 108, 109, 110, 147; Bibles, 161-76

"Boy in the Bush," the, 65, 78-89, 89-90, 237

"Indians and an Englishman," 11-13

Introduction to these Paintings, 218, 224, 232-33

"Kangaroo," 39-40, 46-49, 83, 93, 127-28, 137-38, 197-99, 226, 236, 275, 313-15

"Making Pictures," 210-12, 214-215, 217

"New Mexico," 15-16, 27, 121, 277-78

"On being a Man," 141-42, 188-89

"Ship of Death," the, 88

"Studies in Classic American Literature," 94, 111-12, 135-36, 184-86, 206, 218, 226, 234, 323-326

"Taos," 26-27

"The Letters of D. H. Lawrence," 146, 359-60

"Lawrence the Wayfarer," by Jeanne d'Orge, 316

Lawrence, Frieda, Mrs., *see* Frieda, 10, 11, 13, 30; Meta likes, 158; a glorious woman, 160; letters to the Danes, 293, 303

Leader, 210; all men want a leader, 237-38

League of Nations, 225

"Leaves of Grass," 97

"Leezie Lindsay," 52

Lehmann, Meta, *see also* Meta, 121; description of, 148; letters to Merrill and Gótzsche, 157-59

Leonardo da Vinci, 220-23

"Lette Bölge," 132

Life, *see also* New Life, 59, 210, 224-225, 326

"Little Brown Jug," 241

Lizzie (our old auto), 30; trouble with, 53, 67, 189; won't start, 200; faithful, 242; burns her bearings, 280-91, 293, 298, 312; Florodora, 346

Llanito, 155, 157

Lobo Peak, 55; hike to, 99; canyon valley, 106, 242

Lobo Ranch, 55
 Lompoc, 315-16
 London, 209, 212, 275, 348, 351, 352, 356
 Long Beach, 295
 Lord, the, L. on, 86, 87, 161, 172
 Lorenzetti, 211
 Lorenzo (D. H. Lawrence), 11, 35, 63
 Los Angeles, 128, 287, 292, 293, 294, 295, 298, 301, 303, 304, 307, 308, 310, 311, 312, 319, 322, 331, 333, 345, 351, 352
 "Los Cinco Pintores," 276
 Los Lunas, 278
 Love, 131, 151; mother-love, 235; perishable, 236
 Lucifer, 320
 Luhan, Mabel, *see* Sterne and Mabel, 28
 Luhan, Tony, *see* Tony, 28
 Lummis, Charles F., 28, 155, 189
 Lurid, L. called, 151
 Luxembourg, 270

 Mabel, *see also* Luhan and Sterne, 30, 31, 36, 37, 40, 42, 44, 45; L. tired of, 50; offers L. ranch, 51, 61; L. elucidating, 64; ought to go down on her knees, 65; fled to Santa Fé, 66; two letters from L., 114-15; comes to Del Monte, 144; letter from L., 145, 182, 183; L. suggests cut her throat, 240; photo to L., 252, 265; marries Tony, 273; letter from L., 273, 293, 294; friends with L. again, 352; two letters from L., 353-54
 Mabel's scarf, 36, 37, 38, 67
 Machine, 186; above all, smash, 187, 224
 Malbrook, 190
 Mammon, 87
 "Manby, Old," 34
 "Manby Springs," 34, 114
 Manhattan, 216
 Mankind, L. not finished with, 47-49; care for, 103; complex of, 104
 Mann, Thomas, 104
 Manzanillo, 333, 334
 Mary, *see* Ufer, 130
 Marriage, 187-89
 Marx, 127, 238
 Mastership, 127
 Mastro-Don, 294-95
 Matisse, Henri, 230
 Mazatlan, 333, 335, 337, 340, 342
 McCarty's, 67
 Men, the world of men, struggle with, 47-49; to be at peace with, 92, 207

Merrild, Knud, 22, 37, 58; letter from Seltzer, 123; letter to Seltzer, 123; letter from Seltzer, 124; letter from Ufer, 130; hides Frieda's cigarettes and talks about her children, 139; letter from Meta, 157-58-59; letter from Ufer, 159; exasperated at L., 175; shoots rabbit, 177-82; criticizes L., 213; returns painting, 249; letters from L., 260; for all the letters to M., *see* Lawrence, letter from Ufer, 274; booze in the desert, 281-83; letter from Frieda, 293; Opffer anecdote, 296; letter from Comfort, 298; letter from Frieda, 303; discusses Gauguin and South Seas with L., 323-27; a failure in America L. says, 228; letter from Ufer, 331; letters from Gótzsche, *see* Gótzsche, exhibit in L.A., 345; at opposite poles with L., 349; last letter wouldn't come off, 358; Utopia, 359
 Meta, *see also* Lehmann, at "Danes Cabin," 149; L. disapproves of, 150; tells of Ute people, 155, 271
 Mexican, 12, 13, 33, 101, 106, 191; dead girl, 247, 291, 342
 Mexico (old), 126, 193, 251, 264, 265, 273, 274, 301, 304, 306, 308, 323, 327, 333; travel in, 336-39
 Mexico City, 251, 256, 264, 265, 274, 292, 306, 346, 350
 M.G.M. Studio, 300
 Middle Ages, 221
 Minas Nuevas, 333
 Mind, 141; ashamed of the blood, 186
 Minerva, 210
 Minneapolis, 159
 Mire, 160, 169; story of, 255
 Missouri, State capital of, 331
 "Mi tia tiene un pajaro," 196
 "Moby Dick," 98
 "Mogens," 334
 Mohave Desert, 286
 Holy-Nagy, 227
 Molock, 359
 Mona Lisa, 220
 Money, 127
 Morrell, Lady Ottoline, 359
 Mott, Mrs., 329, 330, 335, 339
 Mott, Walter, 329, 330, 332, 334, 341, 344, 346, 348
 "Mountain Lion," 106
 Mountsier, 114, 116
 Movies, 223

Murry, Middleton, 104, 352
 "My God I am myself," 142
 Nakedness, 203
 National Academy, N.Y., 331
 National Gallery (London), 209, 211,
 212
 National Old Trails Road, 1, 287
 Navajo, 285
 Navajoa, 333, 334, 336
 Nayarit, 336
 Needles, 286
 Negro, African, 216 ; American, 325
 Neighbouring, L. and Frieda discuss,
 46-49
 Nerves, always from, 186
 New Jersey, 310
 New Life, 193 ; want to start a, 251,
 327, 340
 New Mexico, 1, 11, 16, 110, 113 ;
 tale from, 155-57 ; description
 of, 189, 246 ; praise of, 276-78,
 347, 352, 356
 New Orleans, La., 307, 308
 New York, 1, 2, 15, 18, 30, 95, 124,
 128, 274, 291, 293, 301, 304, 306,
 308, 310, 328, 331, 356
 Nexö, Andersen, 88
 Nietzsche, 92
 Nimrod, 178
 "Noli me tangere," 89, 325
 Nordic, 94 ; mythology, 321
 Novelist, as a, 253
 Nukuheva, 324
 Nunez, Cristobal, 155
 Obscene, 151, 153
 Ocotlan, 304
 "Old Manby," 34
 Olesen, Olaf, 10
 Opffer, Emil, 296
 Orient, 307
 Orizaba, 265, 274
 Oso Ridge, 280, 284
 Ownership, 127
 Ozenfant, Amédée, 227
 Pacific, 11 ; coast, 285, 295 ; ocean,
 314 ; Island, 323, 324, 335,
 357
 Padua, 212
 Painter, L. quarrels with, 39
 Paintings, 18 ; L. can't bear to look
 at, 39, 218, 224, 232-33
 Palaeolithic, 219
 Pale-faces, 186
 Palm Springs (Calif.), 292, 310, 330
 "Pan," 88
 "Pansies," 92

Paradise, was destroyed, 64, 188, 326
 Paris, 217, 270, 352, 356, 358
 Parnassus, 148
 Pasadena (Calif.), 287
 Pearson, Ralph, 331
 Peking, 15
 Penitente, 16, 268
 Pennsylvania Academy, 160
 People, don't know how to live, 59 ;
 blue-eyed, brown-eyed people,
 94 ; water people, sea-born,
 ocean-born, 94, 95
 Perishable, every idea is, 236
 Perkins, Mrs., 122
 Philistine, company, 124
 Phoenix, 113, 233
 Picasso, Pablo, 220, 229, 230
 Picoris, 107
 Pictuary, 230
 Pictures, making, 210-12, 214-15, 217,
 227-31
 Piero Di Cosimo, 209, 211, 240
 "Pilgrim of the Apocalypse," 104
 Pincio at Rome, 275
 Pioneers, 12
 Pips, *see also* Bibbles, 160 ; Pipey,
 264, 265, 293, 294, 308
 Plato, 218, 220
 Plymouth, 352
 Poe, 98
 Point Honde, 318
 Politics, 127
 Polytheism, 190
 Pope, 127
 Prado, 229
 Prehistoric, 221, 223
 Prince of Darkness, 320
 "Prince of Denmark, The," 142
 Proust, Marcel, 230
 Puebla (Mex.), 294
 Pueblo, *see* Taos Pueblo
 Puritan, 151, 154, 193
 Purnell, Dr. G., 333, 339
 Purnell, Miss Idella, 343
 "Queen of the Indians," 40
 Questa, 240
 Race, spirit, 184
 "Rainbow, The," 88
 Raphael, 228
 Raton Pass, 1
 Read, Herbert, 233
 Realization, 189
 Recklessness, 194
 Red River, 244
 Relationship, 31, 94, 135
 Rembrandt, 211
 Remsen, 316, 317

Renaissance, 213, 216, 220, 221, 223,
 302, 303
 Renegade, 184, 325
 Renoir, 229
 Republican, 13
 Richthofen, Baroness von, 10; *see*
 also Frieda and Mrs. Lawrence
 Risk, 61, 189
 Rio Grande, 27, 31; Canyon, 32,
 247
 Rolfe, Beatrice, the Bee, 309, 313,
 334, 335, 346
 Roma, Rome, 252, 275, 331
 Roman, judges, 86, 87
 Romney, 229
 Round-up, 23
 Rousseau, Henri, 204
 Rubens, 211
 Rue de Vougirard, 270
 Russia, 126

 Sabino, 67
 Særimne, 321
 Salt Lake City, 312
 Samoa, 324
 San Bernadino (Calif.), 286
 San Cristobal, 243
 Sandby, Paul, 211
 San Diego,
 Sangre de Cristo Mountains, 19, 107,
 189, 278
 San Ildefonso, 144, 145
 San Pedro (Calif.), 319
 Santa Barbara, 315, 316
 Santa Claus (L. called), 320
 Santa Fé, 56, 66, 95, 148, 155, 256,
 270, 274, 293, 328
 Santa Fé Museum, 149, 154, 158,
 276
 Santa Maria, 120
 Santa Monica, 312, 322
 Sass, 266-70, 278
 Satan, 87, 344, 357
 Saul, King, 95
 Savages, 186, 324, 325, 326
 "Say au revoir," 256
 Scandinavia, 21; writers, 88, 262
 "Scarlet Letter, The," 98
 Schuster, 158
 Scotty, 130, 159-60, 169
 Seligman, 253
 Seltzer, Thomas, 96, 98, 114, 116,
 122; letter to Merrild, 123;
 letter from Merrild, 123; letter
 to Merrild, 124, 126, 128, 294,
 295, 310, 334
 Seltzer, Adele Szold, 114, 116, 122,
 123, 126, 346
 Servants, a nuisance, 57

Sex—sexy story, 14; appeal, in the
 head, 151-53; alive, 171
 Shikari, 178
 Shylock, 189
 Sicily, 275, 277
 Sinclair, Upton, 305
 Socialism, 127
 Sodoma, 215
 "Son of Woman," 104
 Soul—suffers its own disintegration,
 187, 224
 South America, 126
 South Sea Islands, 11, 295, 307, 319;
 L. on, 323-26
 South-west, 16, 190, 278, 282, 284
 Spain, 352
 Spanish, 16; Spaniard, 34, 191; L.
 teaching, 195-96
 Spirit, purity of, 214
 Stein, Leo, 28, 278
 Sterne, Mabel, *see* Luhan and Mabel,
 28, 29
 Sterne, Maurice, 29
 Stone Age, 323, 324
 Strindberg, August, 88
 "Studies in Classic American Litera-
 ture," 96, 97, 123
 "Studio, The," 211
 Sunshine Valley, 241; description of,
 246
 Superiority, 127, 204, 205, 206
 "Supplement to the Carmelite," 316
 Swiss, writer, 63; a, 336

 Tahiti, 11, 277, 324
 Taos, 5, 11, 28, 38, 162, 259;
 schweinerei Taos is, 265; spit
 on, 266, 267; old Sass from,
 267-70, 272, 273; goodbye to,
 276, 293, 294, 298, 351, 352, 353,
 356
 Taos Artist Group, 9
 Taos Pueblo, 19, 20, 21, 22, 26-27;
 Christmas dance at, 119-21
 Tehuacan, 265
 Ten Commandments, 215
 Tente Goo, Indian War Chief, 22
 Teotihuacan, Pyramid at, 265
 Tepic, 334, 336, 337, 353
 Thebald, the, 211
 "The Breath of Life," 135
 "The Elephant Battery," 202
 "The Jutlander, he is strong and
 tough," 133
 "The Land of Poco Tiempo," 28,
 155
 Thomas, 86, 204
 Titian, 229
 Together, togetherness, 25, 26, 85

Tony, *see also* Luhan, 30, 40, 41, 42,
145, 252; married to Mabel,
273, 293, 298; not divorced, 354
Topango Canyon, 313
Trinity, 234, 251, 358
Turkish, writer, 43
Turner, 218
Tuscany, 277
Twentieth Century, 219, 221, 302
"Two Years Before the Mast," 98
Txilan, 336
Tyrant, 127

Ufer, Mary, *see also* Mary, 6, 7, 8, 9,
10, 11, 13, 15, 66, 130, 159, 260,
331
Ufer, Walter, 6, 8, 9, 10, 13, 21, 29,
68, 121, 122; letter to Merrild
and Gótzsche, 130, 150, 157;
letter to Merrild and Gótzsche,
159, 169, 260, 264; letter to
Merrild and Gótzsche, 274, 293,
330; letter to Merrild, 331, 339,
357
Uffci, 212
"Ulysses," 105
Universal Studios, 297
U.S.A., 301, 332, 336, 343, 358
Ute Indians, 155
Utopia, 327, 359

"Valley of Death," 246
Vandeyck, 211

Venice, 211
Vera Cruz, 334, 347, 349
Victorville (Calif.), 286
Vikings, 94, 262, 265, 276, 321, 329
Vision, visionary awareness, 214

"Wedding," 212
West, 12; wild west, 23
"When Joan's Ale was New," 31, 32
White, 34, 101; psyche, 111; man,
184
White Mule, 8, 121
White, Roderick, 315
Whitman, Walt, 97, 98, 162, 167
"Whoop-pee," 40
Wiboltt, A. C., 304, 339
Williams, Henry, 316, 318
Wilmington (Calif.), 319
Wint, Peter de, 211
Witt, Lee, 182
Witt, Nina, 40, 118, 122, 159, 182,
183, 184
"Women in Love," 88, 124, 128,
208, 297
Work, menial, insult to spirit, 185
Worthington, James, 316

Yorkshire, pudding, 82

Zodiac, 312
Zuni, 285
Zuni Indian, 280
Zuni Mountain, 280

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